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INDIA'S NUMBER 1 IMAGING MAGAZINE! RS.150

REVIEWS



CANON
POWERSHOT G5x



SONY
CYBER-SHOT
WB500



TAMRON
45MM F/1.8

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ISSUE 10 | VOLUME 11 | JANUARY 2016
16 pages IMS supplement with January 2016 issue.

SPECIAL FEATURE
Kingfisher Calendar

Profile
Sandeep Sulakhe

Interview
Yasir Mehmood

LEARNINGS

LIGHTROOM
DEVELOP MODULE

ALL ABOUT
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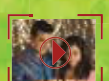
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WELCOME

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INDIA'S NUMBER 1 IMAGING MAGAZINE!



2015 may be remembered for many things but certainly not for innovation in the imaging industry. In fact, 2015 was a tepid year for the industry in general. Product launches were few and far between, the compact camera market continued to slide and new technologies in different areas of imaging were sparse. The mirrorless market grew on a worldwide basis whilst the D-SLR market barely grew. All this indicates that 2016 can only be better.

Advances were registered in 4 areas:-
a) In-body 5-axis image stabilisation first introduced by Olympus and then by Sony.
b) Improvement in the electronic viewfinder and incorporating it in the eye-level viewfinder in place of the optical viewfinder. The mirrorless brigade were the leaders here.
c) Getting high quality stills from 4K movies. Panasonic is the pioneer here.
d) High resolution multi-shot mode as found in the Olympus OM-D EM-5 II. The Olympus, a 16MP camera, can thereby shoot at 40MP.

Happy New Year! Let's hope 2016 is better for all the stakeholders in the imaging industry.

H. S. Billimoria

HERE'S WHAT MAKES US #1

WE ARE GLUED TO THE GLOBAL IMAGING INDUSTRY
Our team is updated with all the benchmarks and road blocks that the field of photography and imaging across the globe experiences. This helps us record the changes in the global perspective, thus making us the first to predict which products will be a rage in the Indian markets.

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OUR TESTS ARE CONDUCTED BY EXPERTS
All equipment go through a series of tests at the hands of our experts. Our reviewers are experts in the field of photography across the country and have many years of experience. That gives us the foresight to distinguish between a passing trend and a big change in the field of photography and imaging. And finally, our reviews are not extended to just fill up the pages!

WE ARE HERE TO HELP YOU
There is no debate on why we are here. Our sole goal is to provide you options and better your judgement in product purchase while, sharing tips and tricks to improve your images. Our biggest joy is in building a bridge between you and your perfect picture!

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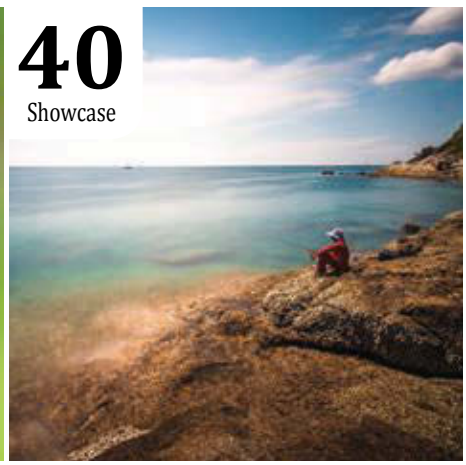
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INDIA'S NUMBER 1 IMAGING MAGAZINE!
ISSUE 130 / JANUARY 2016

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Just a moment!
Readers can find the updated Buyer's Guide, log on *http://smartphotography.in/news/monthly-special*

Smart Photography thanks the readers who participate in the *Picture of the Month* contest. We would like to bring to your attention a few changes in the rules for submission. From now on, you may send in your images with the longer side measuring atleast 17 inches. Please note that the images have to be horizontal. This permits readers to submit panoramic shots, which was not possible with the current size of 17 x 11 inches.

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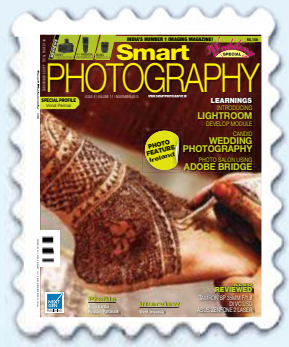
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Idea

Dear Sir,

I would like to tell you that I really like the pictures printed in Smart Photography. They have a fine artistic appeal to them. I particularly liked the photo feature on Moscow. For people, who cannot visit these places, it is a visual treat. Looking at the way people have taken to cellphone photography, I wish cellphones had additional features like a day/ date/ time stamp as well as a provision to add some details like the name of the place being photographed. This would have just added to the entire experience.

Yours faithfully,
Mahesh Kapasi

Admiration

Dear Editor,

I have been a regular subscriber of Smart Photography for quite some time now. I like the pictures that are carried in the magazine. Thanks to the EXIF data, I am able to practice using these values on my D-SLR and learn the tricks behind capturing a great picture. Great work, team. Keep it up!

Yours respectfully,
T. Ranganathan

Gratitude

Dear Uncle Ronnie,

I am quite a fan of your detailed approach to photography. The way you are able to bring out the smallest details in any picture, is quite a commendable task. Your columns are a blessing for newbies because you explain even the smallest and the easiest of the topics. Just by reading Smart Photography, I have learnt so much and this is all because of you. Thank you so much.

Yours Faithfully,
R. Mehra

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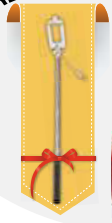


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Snippets

DJI has announced that it has acquired a minority stake in Hasselblad, Sweden. This indicates a strategic partnership between key players in high-end cameras and consumer-level camera drones. Hasselblad is also tied closely to Sony, which can also point to a Sony-DJI collaboration. DJI will also face competition from GoPro, who is all set to roll out its drones next year.

The Leica SL mirrorless camera is mounted with a 24MP full-frame CMOS sensor. Its electronic viewfinder is one of its kind to feature the Leica EyeRes technology, which ensures a resolution of 4.4 million MP, which is equivalent to that of a medium format camera.

Nikon has announced the development of a D-SLR camera—the Nikon D5. A new wireless WT-6 transmitter and Speedlight SB-5000 are also being developed. Through a combination of professional cameras and advanced accessories along with the existing Nikkor lenses, Nikon is widening the envelope for imaging opportunities.

Canon India stated that it aims to garner 30% share of the inkjet printer market as a result of its production and distribution network expansion in the country. Presently, the company stands at 20%. Canon India's President and CEO, Kazutada Kobayashi said, "We see a lot of opportunity in the Indian market. Indians are buying printers for their children's school work. We are expanding our portfolio and we hope to increase our market share to 30% by December 2016."

Marsel van Oosten declared 'Travel Photographer of the Year'

Marsel van Oosten—a dutch photographer— has been confirmed as the overall winner of the 2015 international Travel Photographer of the Year awards (TPOTY). He was awarded this honour amongst participants from over 110 countries. The Young Travel Photographer of the Year 2015 is 18 year old Chase Guttman from the USA. Chase's fellow American, Spencer Cox (age 17), won Young TPOTY 15-18, while 13 year old Indonesian, Michael Theodric won Young TPOTY 14 and Under for the second year in a row.

The winning images will be showcased in the summer of 2016 at TPOTY's London exhibition venue—The Museum of London Docklands. They can also be viewed in the 2015 Winners' Gallery on the awards website www.tpoty.com and will also be published in a new TPOTY book, 'Journey Eight.' The 2016 Travel Photographer of the Year awards will open in Spring.

For the first time ever, the judging panel decided not to award a winner in the HD Video category and Travel Shorts as they felt this year's entries, though very good, did not reach the standard achieved in the previous years.

In the portfolio categories, Chinese amateur photographer, Xia Xuejun bagged top honours in Monochromal, with Australian photographer Scott Portelli and British photographer Timothy Allen sharing the award for the Best Single Image in a Monochromal portfolio. Mitchell Kanashkevich (USA) won Faces, People, Encounters and Timothy Allen won Best Single Image. James Morgan's striking images of wolf hunters in Russia earned the British photographer the first prize in Nature and Environment, with Alessandra Meniconzi (Switzerland) winning Best Single Image.

In the single image categories, Jasper Doest (Netherlands) won Water, Uli Kunz (Germany) won 'A Moment in Light' and Larry Louie (Canada) won 'Colours of the World'. This year, TPOTY introduced a category solely for images shot on mobile phones. iCaptured, the first-ever Smart Shot category, was won by Edgard de Bono (Italy), for his image taken in Benin on an iPhone 5S.

The 'New Talent' prize went to Chinese photographer, Doctor Zhu Jingyi, for his beautifully detailed shots of street life in Jiangsu.

The awards were judged by an international panel of judges.

Casio to debut digital camera for outdoor enthusiasts

Casio Computer Co. announced the Exilim EX-FR100—an outdoor camera that incorporates a 16mm equivalent ultra-wide-angle lens. It uses a 1/2.3-inch Type 12.7MP CMOS image sensor and a 3-inch LCD touchscreen. The camera can detect blur in the images, displaced images etc. and select the best pictures for storage. The camera is resistant to falls up to 1.7m and temperatures as low as -5°C. It is waterproof to depths up to 1.5m and dustproof as well. The camera is available for purchase at approximately 60,000 yen.

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Call for entries: World Press Photo Awards

The World Press Photo Foundation has invited entries from visual storytellers all across the globe for the 6th annual multimedia contest. Entries will be accepted till 20th January, 2016, 12:00 (noon) CET. Partipants will be required to first do an online registration at the 2016 World Press Photo Multimedia Contest entry website before submitting their entries.

The categories have been revised for 2016 with a new category—Immersive Storytelling—being added to existing ones like Short Form, Long Form and Innovative Storytelling.

The multimedia contest will be separate from the annual photo contest. Entry rules and the juries will be different. Specialist jurors will be judging the entries online for some additional reviewing time. Three nominees will be shortlisted. They will be announced on 16th March, 2016, 14:00 CET. The overall winner for each category will be decided by a general jury comprising the four jury chairs. The announcement will be made during the awards ceremony on 23rd April, 2016.

Nominees in each category will be able to attend the annual awards days from 22nd -23rd April, 2016. It will also serve as a networking event for them. The winners in each category will receive a diploma and a Golden Eye award. To know more details, visit ***www.worldpressphoto.org***

Canon to debut Full HD video cameras



Canon Inc. has created Full HD video cameras for professional use. The XA35 and XA30 are mounted with a 1/2.84-inch Type 2.91MP CMOS image sensor. The new CMOS sensor—the HD CMOS PRO—improves the S/N ratio under low light conditions by 3dB leading to 40% noise reduction combined with an optical zoom of 20x and DIGIC DV 4 image processing engine. New recording modes of high luminance priority have been added. This helps in enhancing gradation, colour rendition and sharpness of images. Both models are available for purchase under the open pricing policy.





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Samsung to phase out cameras in Germany

Reportedly, Samsung will bring down the curtain on its digital cameras, camcorders and accessories in Germany. In a statement, the company said, " In Germany, we have been observing for some time a gradual decline in demand for digital cameras, camcorders and related accessories. We have to adapt to the demands of the market and have therefore decided to phase out sales and marketing of these products gradually. This is a decision that affects only the German market." Samsung UK has also confirmed that it will phase out sales of digital cameras and camcorders in the United Kingdom.

Ricoh introduces wide-angle prime lens

Ricoh Imaging has launched the HD Pentax-D FA645 35mm f/3.5 AL (IF)—a newly developed medium-format interchangeable lens—at a suggested price of 250,000 yen. The lens consists of 10 elements in 7 groups including a newly created glass molded aspherical lens element. The lens provides a focal length of 27.5mm (in the 35mm format; when incorporated on a 645Z or 645D camera body) to take wide-angle photographs of landscapes and architectural properties. The lens weighs 570g.



Epson unveils PaperLab recycler

Seiko Epson Corp. has developed a compact office paper recycling system called the PaperLab. This system erases the contents on the paper without any usage of water, also remaking paper in the office premises. The company has plans to launch the PaperLab in 2016, positioning the machine as its 'smart cycle' business. Due to this recycling system, resources will be preserved and wastage will also reduce. Important papers can be processed safely and economically. With this new system, the company has managed to save another important resource, water. The technology, which has been conceptualised to process paper without using water, is the 'Dry Fiber Technology'. Using this machine is an easy task. All that has got to be done is to insert the paper into the machine and start the process. A recycled paper will come out in about three minutes followed by about 14 A4 sized sheets per minute.



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Sharp to reorient LCD panel production

Sharp Corp. is looking at restructuring its LCD panel production in Japan. The company has plans to put an end to producing large-format panels for television monitors in the Kameyama plant as soon as possible. The production of a part of smartphone panels will be tranferred from the Mie plant where the company plans to boost LCD panel production for automobiles.

The company also plans to create a new panel that will save energy, incorporating its IGZO technology. On exisiting models, power consumption will be reduced by 10% to 20%. Termed as the 'Super IGZO', this new panel will be compatible with smartphones, televisions and computer monitors too. It is anticipated that production will begin early next year. With these new panels, the company is looking at generating revenue of 50 billion yen by 2020. The company is negotiating with Innovation Network Corp. for rehabilitation and further funding. The latter will negotiate with some banks for investing in Sharp and restructuring plans of its LCD business.

Canon to venture outside Japan for mass production

Canon plans to make use of its factories in Asia outside Japan for mass producing lower-priced goods while dedicating its facilities at home to the manufacturing of high-end devices. The decreasing value of the yen has played a part in Canon's decision to increase production in Japan. 40% of the products are manufactured domestically. The company wants to increase the number to 60%.

Fujio Mitarai, Chairman, Canon, said that the company will proceed aggressively when it comes to expanding the existing business. It might even consider borrowing funds if blue chip companies are available.

Canon commences production of 80 millionth EOS camera

Canon has attained a milestone with the manufacturing of the 80 millionth EOS camera—the EOS 5DS R. This camera boasts the world's highest pixel count mounted with a 35mm full-frame image sensor. Canon is the manufacturer of all the key elements featuring in the EOS series, which further helps the company in providing a robust product lineup.

The company has maintained its no.1 share globally within the interchangeable lens digital camera market from 2003 to 2014.

Sigma announces new lens filter



Sigma Corporation of America introduced the Sigma Water Repellent (WR) Ceramic Protector that features Clear Glass Ceramic material and offers improved protective qualities. Its pricing and availability is not yet available. The material is shock and scratch resistant.

The company's President, Mark Amir-Hamzeh, said, "The new Clear Glass Ceramic protector is the first of its kind and the strongest material used in the industry. It will enable photographers to safeguard their lenses, while maintaining the impressive sharpness offered by high-quality glass, like our Global Vision line of lenses."

This new lens filter is up to 50% thinner and about 30% lighter than the previous filters. It is compatible with all Sigma lenses.

Panasonic Offers 'Focus Select' mode

Panasonic Corp. has started providing firmware of 'Focus Select' without any additional charges for users of interchangeable lens cameras like Lumix DMC-G7 and DMC-GX8 and for a compact camera—the Lumix DMC-FZ300. The firmware can be recorded on a SD card and then the user can easily install the new fuction by inserting the card into the listed cameras. After a continuous burst but at different focus points, the photographer can choose the best picture by selecting the point he wants to focus on. With this mode, photographers can take better macro pictures and out-of-focus pictures will also reduce to a great extent.

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Olympus reports increase in profits

Olympus Corp. declared a 60% year-on-year gain in its net profit, which amounted to 35.8 billion yen. The company further announced a 30% increase in its operational profit to 50.1 billion yen on an income of 395.8 billion yen, which is a 12% gain. According to the company, factors like profit from the sales of endoscopes and operational profit of the imaging business was better by 20 million yen, for the first time in six years for the first six months. After incurring a loss of nearly 3.7 billion yen over a year ago, the company turned its attention towards interchangeable lens mirrorless cameras and compact cameras. The depreciating yen also helped in boosting the profits. Summing it up, the sales increased by 10% to 41.5 billion yen. Mirrorless camera sales went up by 22% to 26.8 billion yen whereas compact cameras saw a 11% fall, down to 9.6 billion yen.

Ricoh announces profits for first half of 2015-2016

Ricoh Corp. declared a 0.4% increase in its profits to 56.1 billion yen. The company's net profit increased by 1.7% to 34.5 billion yen. A 6.1% gain to 1095 billion yen was noted. Strong sales generated by multifunctional printers, photocopiers along with IT-related services along with the industrial segment's performance was cited as a reason for the enhanced profits.

The Imaging and Solutions (office equipment) segment's sale increased by 6.9% to 978 billion yen and the operational profit dropped by 3.7% to 78.6 billion yen. Due to the vast A4 MFP lineup and improved marketing in East Europe by purchasing companies like Chez and Impromat, the office imaging segment witnessed a rise by 3.4%. The production printing section sales went up by 21.6%.

Sales of the network system increased by 14.6%, also improving services in the foreign markets by acquiring UK and Malaysian companies. The Industrial Business segment sales increased by 11.1% to 63.4 billion yen with an 8.8% increase in profits to 6.1 billion yen. Sales of other segments including digital cameras dropped by 11.4% to 53.7 billion yen. However, the operational profit rose by 2.5% to 1.3 billion yen.

High-end compact cameras like the GR II and the Ricoh WG-40W performed well and the company also promoted the Theta S. The company has revised its projection to 2300 billion yen in comparison to the earlier 2320 billion yen. The estimate for operational profit has been changed to 116 billion yen from 140 billion yen. The net profit has been estimated as 71 billion yen from the earlier 83 billion yen.

Japanese computer manufacturing giants to merge

Toshiba, Fujitsu and Vaio are planning to integrate their personal computer operations. This integration will place the companies on top in the domestic PC market with a share of more than 30%. But their presence in the shrinking global market will reduce to a measly 4.2%, which is not enough to compete with the Chinese and US giants. IDC—a US research firm—reports that global PC shipments touched 363.82 million units in 2011. Low-priced machines are hot sellers in developing nations, which increases hurdles as profit margins grow thin. Market leaders are looking at drastic restructuring for survival. China's Lenovo Group with a share of 19.6% from January to September, embarked on a 5% workforce reduction in August due to its shrinking computer operations and other factors. Taiwan's Acer also reduced its work force by 7% and product lines to bring in some net profit in 2014 after a period of loss from 2011-2013.

The integration plan by the three Japanese players is expected to improve the companies' abilities to negotiate with parts' suppliers. They will also share factories and sales channels. A strong emphasis on design and building the brand could help PC makers towards a growth-marked path, a model akin to that of Apple.

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Action camera category market research revealed

According to Twice Publication, GoPro is the market leader. It has captured nearly 80% of the action camera category in 2014. Some of the other brands include Activeon CX. Priced at $119, this camera has built-in Wi-Fi along with a 2-inch LCD display. It can capture 1080p videos at 30 frames per second. The Polaroid Cube priced at $149 features built-in Wi-Fi, an image stabilisation system and an 8MP camera. 1440p videos can be recorded at 30 frames per second. EyeSee 360 is priced at $399 and captures 360-degree videos. It is also protected with a waterproof casing. Other features include 32GB internal storage and 2 hour battery life. Panasonic HX-A1 is priced at $179 and can take pictures in the dark through an IR light source and its Night mode. Kodak Pix Pro SP360 provides 1080p video capture at 30 frames per second, 10MP stills, 1 inch LCD display, Wi-Fi and NFC.

Smartphone panel suppliers compete to upgrade operations

Competition has intensified between OLED smartphone display panel manufacturers from Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and China as they try to improve operations. During the latter half of November, South Korea's LG Display unveiled plans to open a new plant for small and midsize OLED panels used in smartphones and televisions. The estimated investment has come up to US$8.64 billion. Operations at this plant are expected to begin in the first half of 2018. The company anticipates a spike in the demand for these panels. Apple has also taken the plunge and decided to use OLED panels for iPhone models due in 2018. Samsung Electronics is already providing OLED panels in its smartphones.

The tilt towards OLED was a result of the rise of Chinese LCD panel manufacturers. Government subsidies have aided China's four quasi-state panel makers like Tianma Microelectronics and BOE Technology build state-of-the-art LCD factories. Investment up to 3 million yen is expected over the next three years. Yearly global smartphone panel shipments stand at 1.5 billion units. The smartphone market has hit a plateau giving rise to the fear that LCD panel prices may plummet. Japan Display's smartphone panel revenue contributes nearly 80% to the whole revenue. The company has installed a manufacturing test line for OLED panels endeavouring to begin mass production in 2018.

In the next generation OLED market, Japanese makers have let South Korean rivals surpass their pace. Japan still has an edge when it comes to panel manufacturing equipment and materials. But the point to be noted is whether Japanese manufacturers and the government can join forces under the national flag.

Nikon reports 9% increase in profit

Nikon Corp. announced a 9% increase in its net profit year-on-year to 11 billion yen. This is largely because of favourable sales of the old and new upgrades of semiconductor manufacturing machines. The profitability of digital cameras improved due to the shift to mid-level and higher products. But individual unit sales did not meet the target.

Sales increased by 5% to 392 billion yen and operational profit by 11% to 14.5 billion yen. Imaging business sales dropped by 5% to 263.6 billion yen and though the operational profit was better than the previous estimate, yet a decline of 11.9% to 24.2 billion yen was noted.

A high-specification model like the D750 and a mid-range level product such as the D7200 sold well. Compact cameras such as Coolpix P900 with ultra-telephoto lens and Coolpix P610 with 60x zoom were well accepted. However, the shrinking market did affect the segment.

The company added that 2 million units of interchangeable lens cameras, 2.82 million units of interchangeable lenses and 3.12 million units of compact cameras were sold.
The company revised its original projection for the entire year. A 20% increase in the net profit to 22 billion yen. For sales, it was a 1.7% drop to 855 billion yen. The operational profit of 34 billion yen remains unchanged.

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CEIF to be hosted at Bombay Exhibition Centre

Consumer Electronic Imaging Fair (CEIF) is a major yearly event of All India Photographic Trade and Industry Association (AIPTIA). It is the world's 3rd largest consumer electronic and imaging show. CEIF is being organised from 7th to 10th January, 2016 at the Bombay Exhibition Centre, Goregaon (E), Mumbai, from 10:00 am to 6:00 pm. The entry charge is Rs.500 per person. Visitors can do an online registration on ***www.preconfirm.in/ceif2016***.

Over 250 exhibiters from the electronic imaging industry, including multinational companies will showcase the latest digital cameras, video cameras, photo printing machines, lighting equipment, accessories etc. along with service providers, who will feature their art work related to the imaging industry.

AIPTIA also displays quality images in its gallery to promote photography. Photography enthusiasts can join this association. Some of the benefits reaped from the membership is a Member Welfare Fund aimed at supporting deserving candidates, access to seminars and workshops conducted by the association, a platform for members to discuss their grievances within the framework of the organisation and a complimentary directory of the members will be issued to promote an interactive community of photographers, traders, manufacturers and service providers. Members will be issued a certificate of membership and a photo identity card. The association even invites lifetime memberships. For individuals, the fee is Rs.10,000. Corporates will have to pay Rs.50,000 whereas partnerships, Rs.25,000. To know more, visit ***www.aiptia.org***



Kamran Khan sets new photography record

Kamran Khan—a photographer from Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh—has been recognised for photographing the widest view of the Himalayas. Gujarat's Genius Foundation has entered his name in the 'World Records India' category. The picture was taken from Abott mount, a scenic location near Lohaghat, Uttarakhand. The panoramic picture covers a 500km range, which also includes peaks like Bandarpoonchh, Shivling, Chaukhamba, Trishul, Mrigthuni, Nanda Devi, Nanda Kot, Panchachuli, Api, Nampa, Jethi Bahurani etc.

Congratulations Mr. Khan!

Panasonic launches 4G/LTE enabled smartphone

Panasonic India has announced the Eluga Mark, which is available at Rs.11,990. The smartphone is packed with features such as a fingerprint sensor that allows single touch access wherein users can configure up to 8 different finger prints at a single point of time. The smartphone also allows Android-For-Work, which makes for improved IT security and BYOD compatibility that lets devices operate on secure corporate networks.

The Eluga Mark is powered by Android 5.1 and a 1.5 Ghz Qualcomm Snapdragon octa core processor. It is loaded with 2GB RAM along with 16GB internal memory, expandable up to 32GB. The smartphone also has a 13MP rear camera and a 5MP front camera. The dual sim smartphone runs on a 2500 mAh battery.

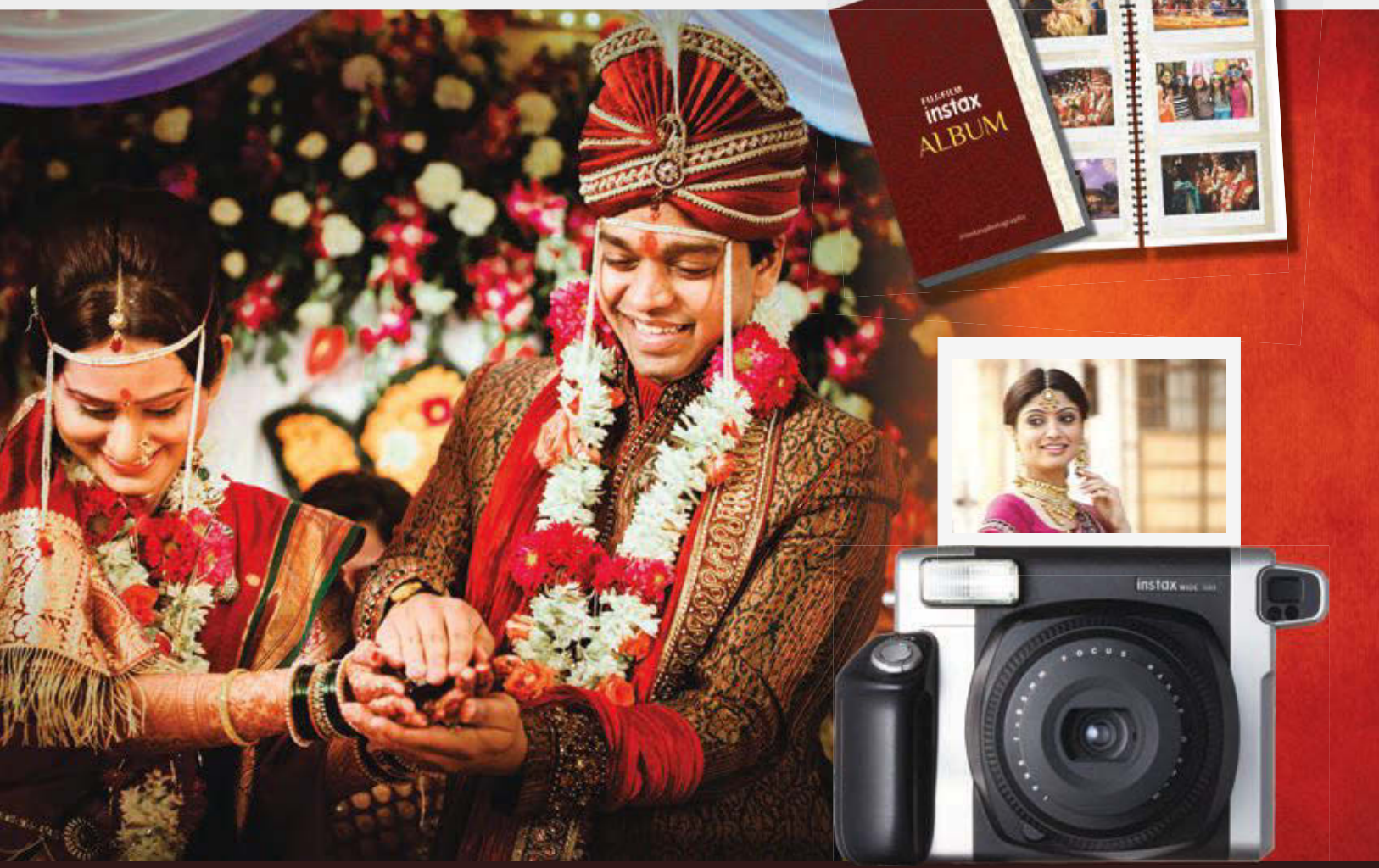
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Nature & Wildlife Photography Exhibition

Photo by Amit Rane





Photo by Dr. Caesar Sengupta

DCP Expeditions – one of the fastest growing wildlife photography training academies in India – organised their annual Nature & Wildlife Photography Exhibition at Thane Kalabhavan near Kapurbawdi Junction, Thane, from 4th - 6th December 2015.

The exhibition, showcasing nearly 300 images from 85 photographers, drew more than 3000 visitors from all over the city. Everyone admired the high quality of the images as well as the dedication of the photographers who created those wonderful images. Many visitors enrolled themselves as members of DCP Expedition, eager to join the Weekend Photowalks which DCP has been conducting since over two years now. Please visit ***www.dcpexpeditions.com*** to know more about the organisation.

The images were displayed in three galleries which were inaugurated by Rohinton Mehta – Technical Editor, Smart Photography, along with Pravish Pandya – Professor of Zoology at Bhavan's College; Avinash Kubal – Deputy Director of Maharashtra Nature Park, Mahim, and Mukul Kashyap – Indian Subcontinent Manager, Manfrotto India.

Broncolor Lighting Workshop

The Shari Academy, in collaboration with Vihang Vasa of Photonics Enterprises, organised two full-day workshops on the 1st and 4th December 2015 on Broncolor Lighting by Nadia Winzenried at the Shari Academy Premises. Nadia Winzenried is a photographer and Technical Advisor for Bron Electronik AG, Switzerland and a veteran of innumerable lighting workshops conducted worldwide. Both the workshops were packed to capacity. Students and participants were completely floored by the sheer professional and super speed at which Nadia went through one blockbuster shot after the other. A visual treat of technology and creativity!





Photo by Nadia Winzenried

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Get ready to experience Travel Photo Jaipur

Travel Photo Jaipur—a contemporary culture initiative—will be held in Jaipur from 5th to 14th February, 2016. This festival will feature travel photography. Around 14 exhibitions will be conducted at some of the city's landmark locations like the Hawa Mahal, Albert Hall Museum and Jawahar Kala Kendra. Reputed international and Indian photographers will showcase their works at heritage sites with contemporary art at the same time.

The festival will also feature a travelling photo studio by Aradhana Seth—a set designer and photographer. At this festival, people will also get to see the conversion of the former Jaipur Art School (Kishanpole Bazar) into a temporary exhibition space by the photographer, Akshay Mahajan. During the first weekend of the festival (5th to 7th January), a series of talks and screenings will be conducted. Some of the confirmed panellists are Yumi Goto (co-founder and curator of the Reminders Photography Stronghold), Giles Tillotson (Academic and former Director of the Royal Asiatic Society, London), Thomas Seelig (Curator, Fotomuseum Winterthur, Switzerland), Rafal Milach (Photographer and founder of Sputnik Photos).
The festival will be inaugurated by the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Rajasthan, Vasundhara Raje and is being partnered by the Department of Tourism, Government of Rajasthan.



'Bhutan Diaries' by Serena Chopra
Picture Courtesy: Travel Photo Jaipur

"With time, the photography festival could have the same appeal for lovers of photography across the globe as the Jaipur Literature Festival has for lovers of literature. The potential is enormous not only because photography is a far more accessible medium than literature, but also because the city of Jaipur has so many sites that could be transformed into remarkable venues for photographic display" commented Nikhil Padgaonkar, Producer, Travel Photo Jaipur.

Panasonic India debuts wearable camera

Panasonic India launched its wearable camera—the HX-A1. At 45 grams, this camera is waterproof and shockproof up to 1.5m. It is also dustproof and freezeproof down to minus 10°C.
The camera also includes an IR filter (night mode) and can be used with an infrared light source. It also features loop recording. This Wi-Fi wearable camera can be mounted onto shoulder bags or helmets or even a tripod using a tripod mount. Optional accessories like a handlebar mount, extended battery, twin mount for a light source, clip mount and head mount are available. Full HD footage is also captured by the camera. The camera also has a slow motion mode, which can shoot videos at 60fps at 720p or 120fps at 480p.
Gaurav Ghavri, Product Head, Panasonic India, said, "Panasonic India has made a sustained effort to grow in the market by offering our innovative and technologically advanced products to cater to the ever evolving customer needs in the camera segment. The introduction of HX-A1 wearable camera defines Panasonic's unrelenting pursuit of providing unmatched experience creating excitement in the action camera market."



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Rohit Ads

J P Singhal's works featured at Jehangir Art Gallery

Legacy when remembered often shows what defines great. At Jehangir Art Gallery, works of artist and photographer, J P Singhal were showcased between December 22-28. He passed away on May 7, 2014. But his works continue to strike a chord. He has painted over 2700 paintings and his work has been reproduced nearly 800 million times.

His paintings often covered subjects like mythology, rural India, Hindi cinema etc. He was also well known for creating a feel of several iconic hindi movies like 'Dil', 'Satyam Shivam Sundaram' etc. through his camera and styling. He was known to be a prolific portfolio specialist, concept shoots pioneer etc. He had also designed creatives for approximately 150 films. His experience of working with M F Husain inclined him towards contemporary art and thus began a journey of reinventing himself. Two coffee table books have been published that carry his work, like photographs and paintings of Ajanta Ellora and actresses of the Hindi film industry.



Painting by J P Singhal

Suniel Marathe awarded with international distinctions

Suniel Marathe—a scientific officer in BARC (Bhabha Atomic Research Centre)—has been conferred with two international distinctions PPSA (Proficiency in Photography by Photographic Society of America) and GPU Aphrodite (Global Photographic Union, United Kingdom) between October-December. He has received more than 1750 acceptances in various national and international acceptances with over 105 awards. His work has been recognised in 27 countries.

Congratulations Suniel!

Polaroid makes an instant entry

Polaroid has turned its attention towards the Indian market with products like the Polaroid Cube, the Cube+ and the pocket-friendly Polaroid ZIP printer. It has been estimated that the company is looking at a CAGR of 23.83% by volume and 16.2% by value over 2013-2018, attaining 76 million units and retail value of $3.2 billion.

The Polaroid Cube can shoot videos at 1080p/720p resolution. Armed with a 6MP camera and also being weather-proof and splash-proof, the Polaroid Cube is perfect to capture life in all its adventures. Due to its magnetic base, the camera can find support on any magnetic surface. Its memory can be extended to 32GB and the device has a battery life of 1.5 hours. The camera is available in Black, Blue and Red on Flipkart.

Polaroid ZIP prints smudge-proof and water-proof pictures of 2''x3''. Equipped with a 500mAh Lithium battery, the printer gives 25 sheets per charge. It is available in Black, White, Blue and Red on Flipkart.









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Picture of the Month

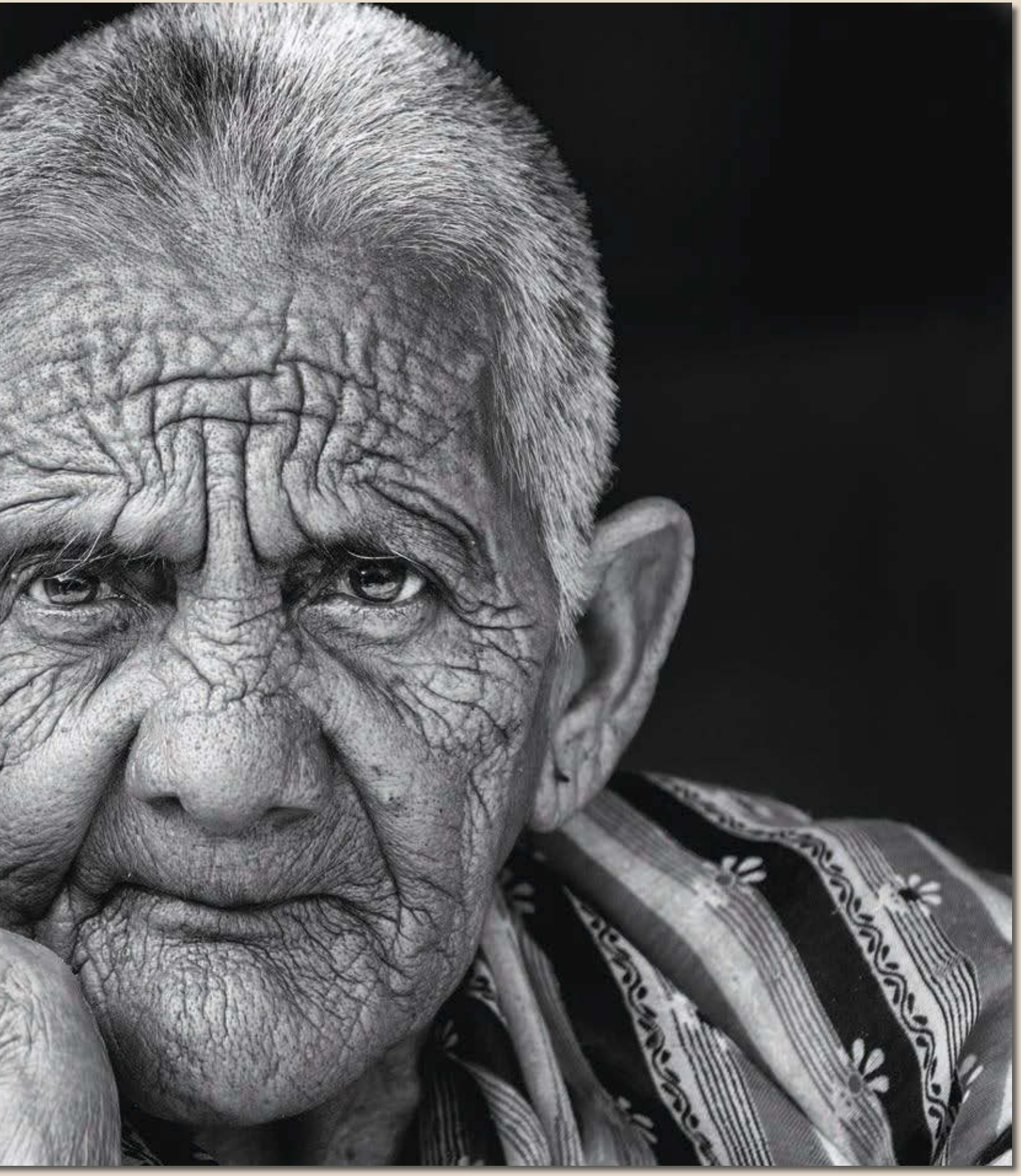
Photograph by
Plabon Das



PICTURE OF THE MONTH

We are sure that all of you have a few pictures that you think are prize worthy. It happens very often that you don't know where to send the image that could put a feather in your cap. If you have such images (we're sure you have many!), send us ONE such horizontal image. If it qualifies, we shall publish it as a double-spread.

a. You have to guarantee that the picture was shot by you
b. If there are people in the picture who can be identified, we'll need a model release
c. The picture should not have been printed elsewhere (magazine newspaper, or offered to any publication)
d. Mark the entry as "Picture of the Month" and rename the file using your name
e. You may send images via print/e-mail to: Next Gen Publishing Ltd.,2nd Floor, C Wing, Trade World, Kamala Mills Compound, Senapati Bapat Marg, Lower Parel (W), Mumbai 400013 (or) sphoto.india@gmail.com



A NOTE TO OUR READERS

1. The picture has to be horizontal.
2. Kindly ensure that the longer side should measure atleast 17 inches, at 300ppi.
3. Low resolution images will not be accepted.
4. We do not check images on online galleries.
5. Kindly ensure complete contact/address details are provided. Winners will have to collect their prize from *SP*'s Mumbai office or send an authorised representative to do so.
6. Please make sure that your picture does not have your name/logo on it.

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Candid **Moods**

As told to **Disha Khemchandani**



Riot Of Colours

Camera: Nikon D7000; **Lens:** Nikkor 300mm f/4 IF ED with TC 14EII; **Aperture:** f/5.6; **Shutter speed:** 1/1000sec; **ISO:** 800





Shishir Kar

Soumik Sengupta—an Inspector in the Kolkata Police Force—grew up amidst flora and fauna in Berhampore, Murshidabad, West Bengal. Different kinds of butterflies and birds always caught his attention. It was during his college that he was given a film camera. He started capturing different family ocassions. After a significant period of time, he further chose to widen his knowledge of photography and purchased his first D-SLR—the Nikon D90 with an 18-105mm lens. Photographers like Alan Murphy and Raymond Barlow have influenced him. He also follows the work of Indian photographers like Sudhir Sivaram ,Raj Dage, Amit Rane and Rathika Ramashami. Other than bird photography, he also enjoys capturing festivals like the Hornbill festival in Nagaland. His yearn to learn more about photography increases with every passing day. He is driven by the desire to create many more wonderful pictures. |**SP**

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Camera: Nikon D7000; **Lens:** Nikkor 300mm f/4 IF ED with TC 14EII; **Aperture:** f/5.6; **Shutter speed:** 1/1250sec; **ISO:** 450

Juvenile



Hungry

Camera: Nikon D7000; **Lens:** Nikkor 300mm f/4 IF ED with TC 14EII; **Aperture:** f/6.3; **Shutter speed:** 1/1000sec; **ISO:** 560

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Jumping Jack

Camera: Nikon D7000; **Lens:** Nikkor 300mm f/4 IF ED with TC 14EII; **Aperture:** f/5.6; **Shutter speed:** 1/1250sec; **ISO:** 800



Flying Fox

Twins



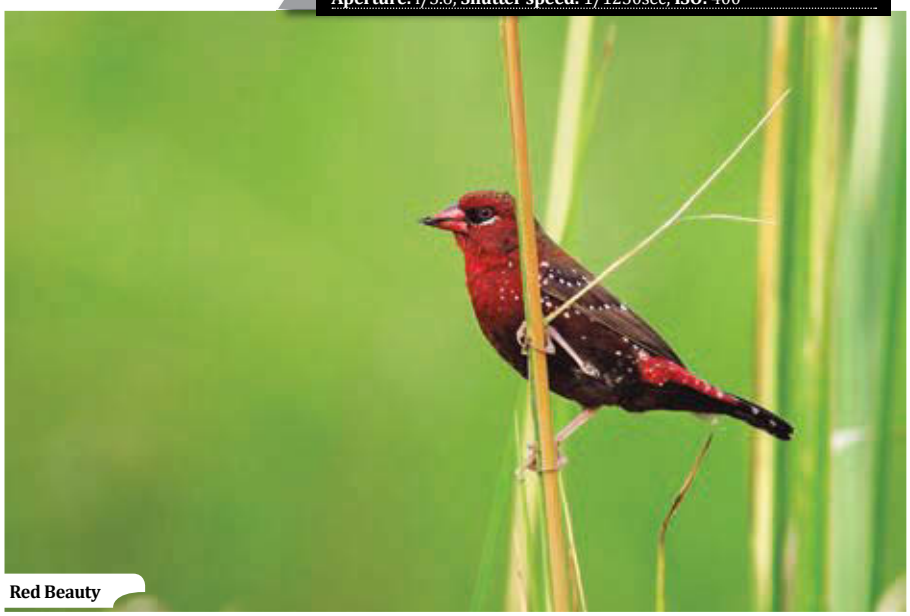
Camera: Nikon D7000; **Lens:** Nikkor 300mm f/4 IF ED with TC 14EII; **Aperture:** f/6.3; **Shutter speed:** 1/1250sec; **ISO:** 220

Sitting Alone

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Camera: Nikon D7000; **Lens:** Nikkor 300mm f/4 IF ED with TC 14EII; **Aperture:** f/5.6; **Shutter speed:** 1/1250sec; **ISO:** 400



Red Beauty



Camera: Nikon D7000; **Lens:** Nikkor 300mm f/4 IF ED with TC 14EII; **Aperture:** f/6.3; **Shutter speed:** 1/1000sec; **ISO:** 450

Long Way To Go



Camera: Nikon D7000; **Lens:** Nikkor 300mm f/4 IF ED with TC 14EII; **Aperture:** f/6.3; **Shutter speed:** 1/1600sec; **ISO:** 360

The Idyllic Life

As told to **Disha Khemchandani**







Burj Khalifa, Dubai

Exif data not available



Camera: Fujifilm XE-1; **Lens:** Rokinon 12mm f/2
Aperture: f/11; **Shutter speed:** 10sec; **ISO:** 200

Kashid Beach, Alibaug



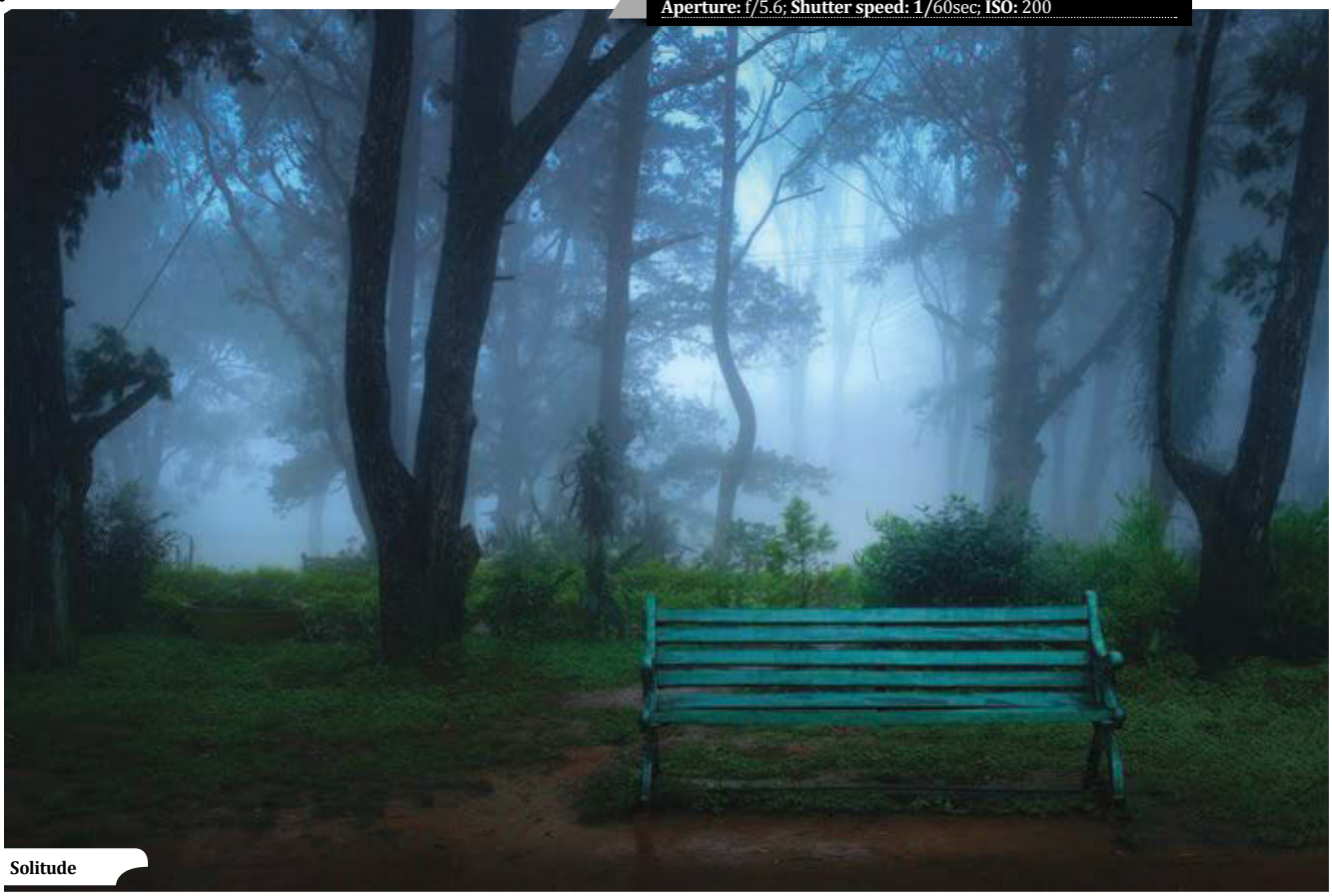
Sandeep Sulakhe

Sandeep Sulakhe—a software consultant from Bengaluru—took up photography in 2011 when he purchased his first camera—the Nikon D3100. He started learning about the craft through online photography forums, reading books and by assisting photographers. Landscape and nature photography are his forte. He prefers using slow shutter speeds to capture surreal colours, movements, and unique moods which are otherwise not possible to witness with naked eyes. His main window to take photographs is half an hour before sunrise and after sunset. He also engages in commercial assignments for hotels and resorts.

Dubai Marina

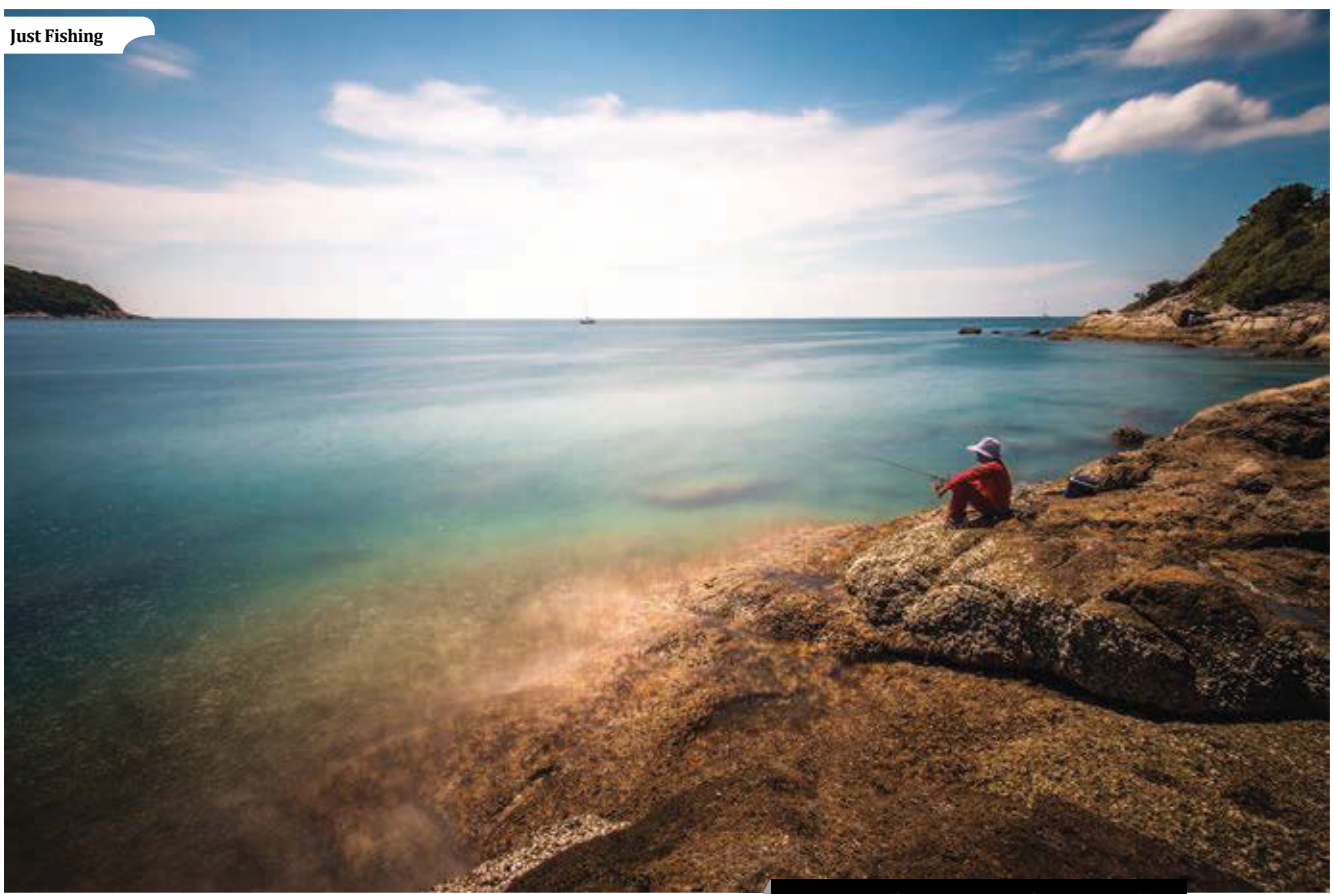
Exif data not available

Camera: Fujifilm XE-1; **Lens:** Fujinon XF 18-55mm f/2.8-4 LM OIS
Aperture: f/5.6; **Shutter speed:** 1/60sec; **ISO:** 200



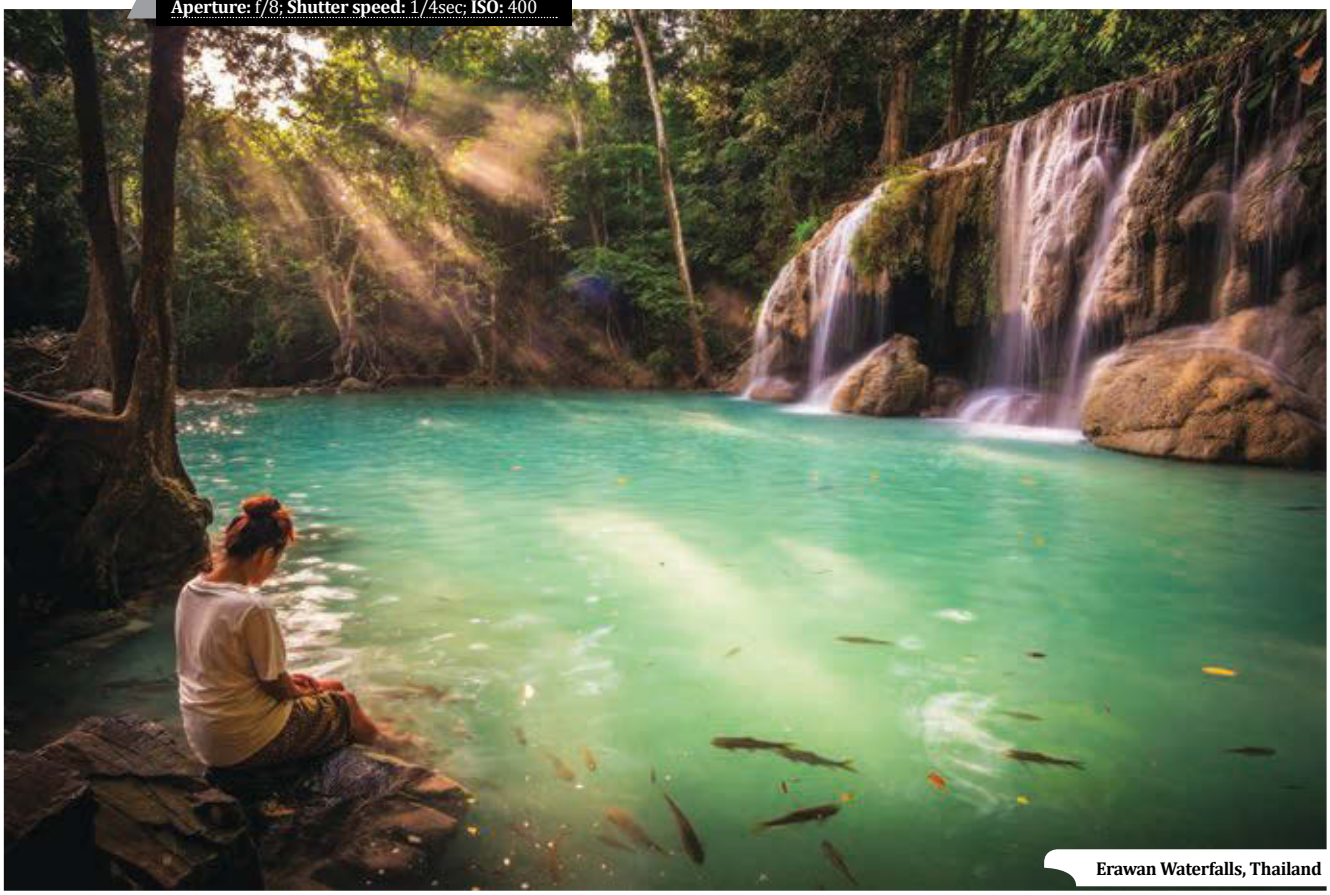
Solitude

Just Fishing



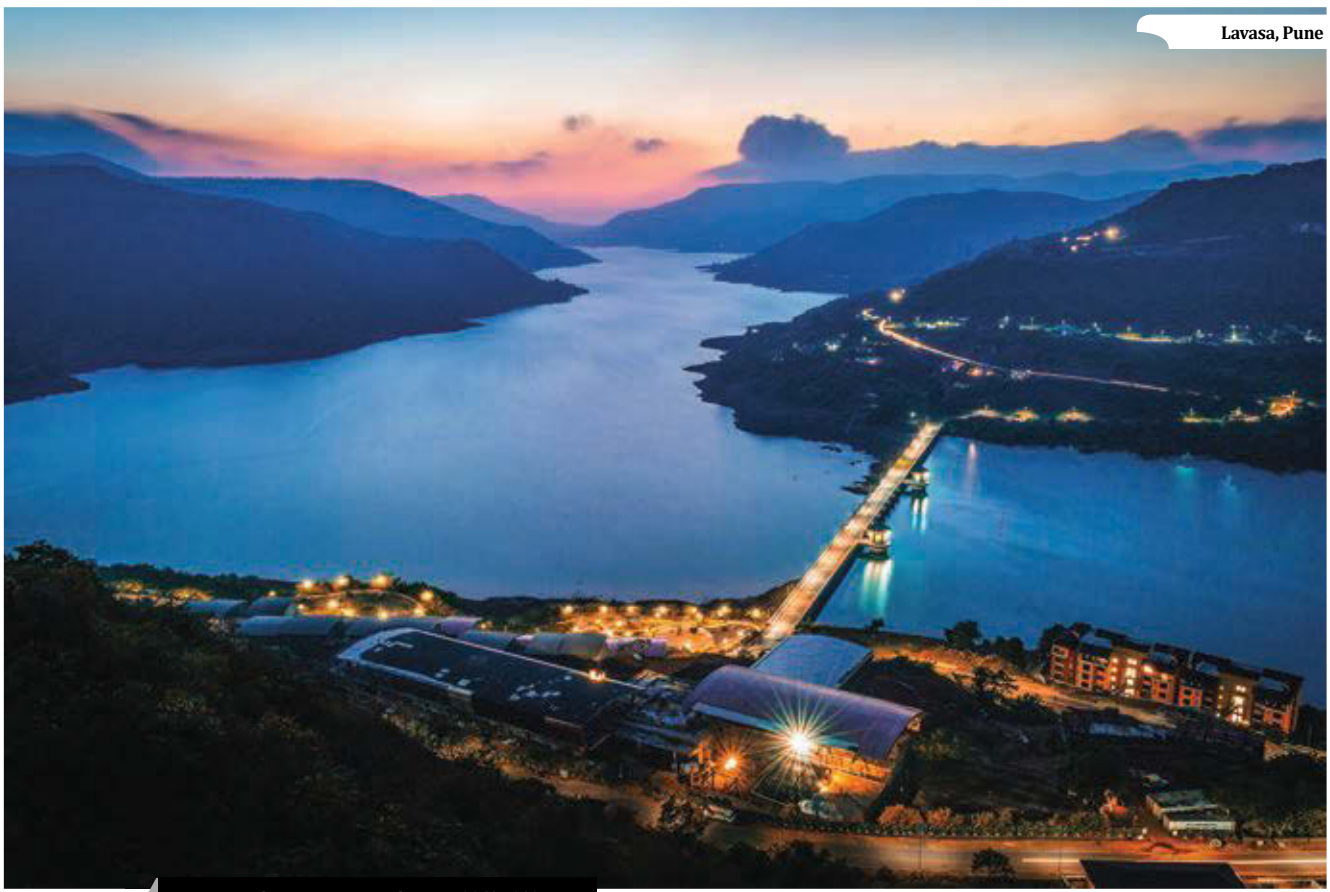
Camera: Fujifilm XE-1; **Lens:** Rokinon 12mm f/2
Aperture: f/11; **Shutter speed:** 20sec; **ISO:** 200

Camera: Fujifilm XE-1; **Lens:** Rokinon 12mm f/2
Aperture: f/8; **Shutter speed:** 1/4sec; **ISO:** 400



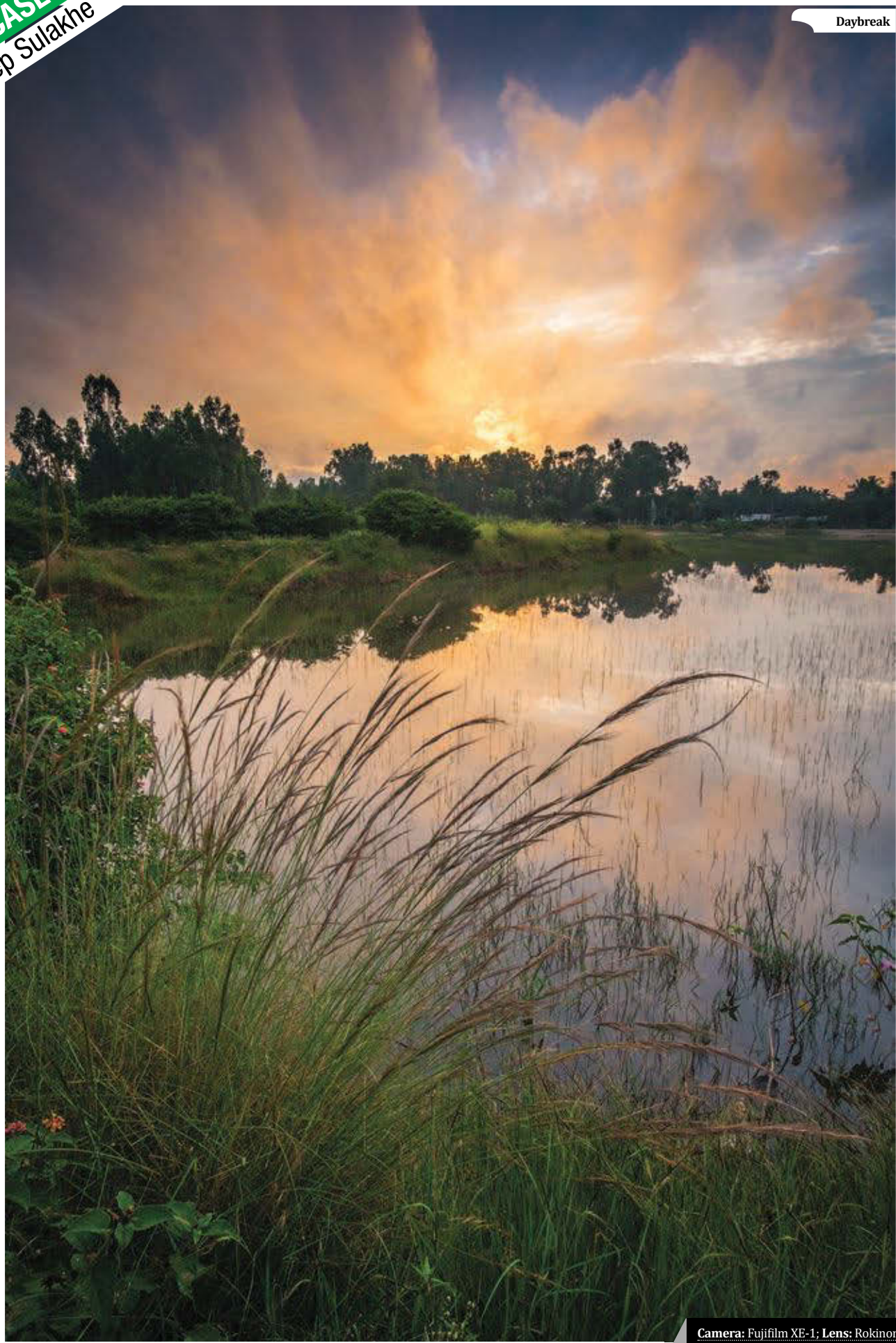
Erawan Waterfalls, Thailand

Lavasa, Pune



Camera: Nikon D90; **Lens:** Nikon 18-55 f/3.5/5.6 VR
Aperture: f/13; **Shutter speed:** 30sec; **ISO:** 200

Daybreak



Camera: Fujifilm XE-1; **Lens:** Rokinon 12mm f/2
Aperture: f/11; **Shutter speed:** 1/10sec; **ISO:** 200

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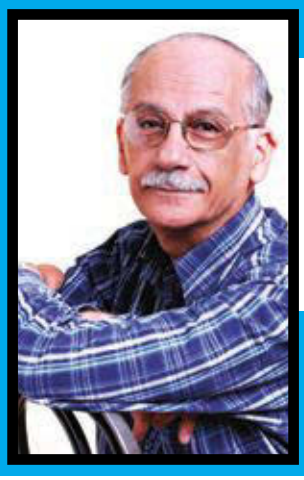
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Rohinton Mehta,
Technical Editor, Smart Photography

A Street Scene

This street scene comes to us from Vibhuti Jain via email. Vibhuti has requested for some hints to improve the photo.

Here is my *personal* opinion. It saddens me to see this photo. These poor children, who at this age should be enjoying their life and going to school, are forced to work, collecting the discards that others have thrown away. Though poverty is a fact of life, I do not like to show it through my photography. I like to show happiness and the good things in life in spite of all the poverty around us. Having said that, as far as the picture goes, it is well taken. It depicts the hard life that these children have to go through to get a decent meal.

Some may find the traffic at the right top corner distracting. I find it necessary. It shows the road-side surrounding. It gives an idea of how these children have to forget their own safety concerns and do what they have to do for a living. The rubble and the dirt add to the impact in this particular case.

The picture was taken during mid-day and that is why the children's eyes are under deep shadow.

I don't think I can improve this picture. It already does what it was intended to do. A very well depicted street scene.

Camera: Nikon D5100;
Aperture: F/9; **Shutter speed:** 1/320sec; **ISO:** 100





Mirrorscape

Mohit Tejpal has sent us this image. Mohit has not mentioned the section for which this is submitted and hence I take it that the picture was sent for the *If I Were You* section.

First, let me say that this is a lovely picture. The boat appears to be bringing in the passengers, while the distant background fades into softness. Since the left side of the sky is blue, I take it that the picture was shot early in the morning on a foggy day.

This is yet another picture which I don't think needs any improvement. And

Camera: Canon EOS 6D;
Lens: EF 24-105 f/4 IS USM
Aperture: F/7.1;
Shutter speed: 1/2000sec; **ISO:** 200

Original





Edited 1



Edited 2



Edited 3

yet, such pictures can be interpreted in different ways. Here are three variations of the same image. In edited image 1, the fine details have been toned down and a warmer tone is used to make it feel like a late evening scene on a really foggy day. Edited image 2 shows the opposite – the scene as it is likely to appear on a cold early morning. Edited image 3 is a black and white version of the same photo, but with enhanced shadow details.

Photographs are never a true documentation of what you saw; rather, they are representations of what you want the viewer to see!

IF I WERE YOU

E-mail your images at **sp@nextgenpublishing.net**

Note: If I Were You is meant to encourage and guide readers, and help them improve their photography. Please ensure that the required camera/exposure details are sent to us (or are available in the EXIF data). We shall not accept images for this section if the required data is not available. Readers are requested to send their images at 300ppi for 8 x 10-inch size. If they are too small, working on them is difficult, and hence they may be rejected.

Original



Camera: Nikon D7000; **Lens:** 18 -105mm
Aperture: F/11; **Shutter speed:** 1/125sec; **ISO:** 100

Edited 1





Edited 2

Seascape

This seascape, shot in the early morning, comes to us from Boopaathi R. S. via email. He wants to know if he has followed the guidelines of photography and how this picture could have been improved.

I will repeat my oft-repeated sermon. What is it in the picture that prompted you to take the shot? Was it the sea or the sky or was it the pipe sticking out at the right or was it the foreground rocks? Or was it the splashing of the sea waves on the rocks at the right? Unless I am wrong, I think you were attracted by the sea and the sky. But, as it stands, the sea and the sky are depicted the weakest in your frame. The rocky foreground does add to the depth though.

In my opinion, the pipe does not add to the picture. And the horizon is not level. It is leaning to the right. Water maintains its own level and hence you have to be very careful to ensure that your camera is perfectly levelled. *If I were you*, I would have taken the shot only if there was some drama in the sky or the water. Would have also tried a different viewpoint, and eliminated the pipe (if it was a cannon instead, that would have been great).

In the edited picture, I have adjusted the tones in Photoshop, levelled the horizon and applied a dose of sharpening.

Also observe edited picture 2. If your main attraction was the wave breaking into the rocks, your framing should have been something like this. A longer lens would have helped in that case. But I would also have waited for a stronger wave! |SP



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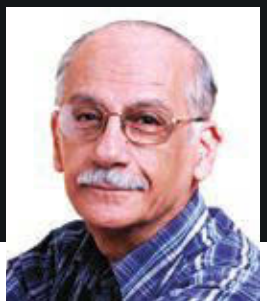
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Ask Uncle Ronnie



Is Editing Justifiable?

Is it justifiable to edit/manipulate files to enhance saturation or contrast of pictures sent to any photo contest? If yes, then how can the credit go to the photographer for the vibrant or excellent image? I think the credit should go to the editing tool. Yet, if it is necessary to edit an image, what should be the limit of editing? Please clarify.

Rajesh Mondal

Note: The query has been re-worded by us. Such queries have been answered in the past too.

While I welcome your query, I can see that you are against any editing/manipulation. No problem; to each his own! But please, with an open mind, try to understand what I have to say.

1. You are photographing a landscape. With your eyes you see the vast vista before you – may be, for example, 1 mile across. You then decide your focal length. The focal length of your lens decides how much of the scene will be captured. You then decide a position from where you will take the picture. You also decide whether you will photograph the scene from your eye-level or ground-level or from the top of a near-by hillock. Just think about it – are you not manipulating? Are you not telling the viewers that while I see the vast scene before me (from my eye level), I want you to see only the area that I have decided upon by choosing my focal length and only from my point of view?

The very act of choosing a focal length is a form of manipulation!

2. Now your point about the question of credibility if the saturation or contrast is adjusted. Well, you may choose not to enhance the saturation and/or contrast; the choice is yours. But I assure you, your pictures will most likely be without any 'punch'.



By default, contrast, saturation and colour tone are set to zero. You can also set the sharpness to a lower value.

There is a technical reason why we need to enhance the saturation and contrast (as well as some other parameters). Ideally, you are supposed to shoot in Raw. When you shoot in Raw, the parameters that you have set in your camera (such as saturation, contrast, White Balance, sharpness) are not applied to the image. This causes the image to appear 'flat' (lacking in contrast/saturation).

Even if we shoot only in JPEG, we always set our cameras to 'low' contrast, 'low' saturation, 'low' sharpness (if you don't, you risk overexposed highlights, clogged shadows and jagged-looking edges). These parameters are then adjusted on the computer to our liking. (see picture above)

Also keep in mind that no camera can record exactly what our eyes see.

3. About "the credit should go to the editing tool". Tell me, when you take a good photo, do you give the credit to your camera? Cameras don't take pictures by themselves; we do. The more complicated the 'tool', the more we need to study and know how to operate it. It is human intelligence that eventually gets the credit.

4. The limits for editing? The sky is the limit. But first read and understand this. If you are a documentary/sports photographer or a scientific photographer, please refrain from doing any editing. Your duty is to 'record' exactly what is happening before you. You cannot say that you are "creating a work of art". But if you are not in the above list, and if you consider photography as an art form, then you can do whatever editing you like. But here too, there can be a limit. Let us say that you are a wildlife

photographer. You photograph a tiger drinking water. Then, using your skills in using an image editing program, you 'create' five more tigers, all drinking water together. Can you send this photo to a photo competition? The answer is a strict "No". By doing that you would not be telling the truth. But, consider this for a moment. You do the required editing (or manipulating, if you prefer) and then hang that picture in your sitting room. If asked, you say that the picture is digitally enhanced/manipulated. You have created the image as a work of art. You do not claim it to be the 'original' photo. In this case, you are not trying to deceive anyone and hence you have done no wrong.

Some people think that what was not in the original, cannot be added. Remember, an artist (painter) starts with a blank easel (paper). Do you question him as to why he added some trees, or the hut or the blue sky with white clouds? No? Then why do you ask a photographer? Photography, like painting, is an art.

Some people think that what is there in the original, should not be eliminated. You take a portrait of a friend. While doing so, you notice a plastic wrapper besides your friend. You remove the plastic wrapper and then take the picture. You do that before taking the photo, someone else does that afterward. Same end, different ways!

Of course, you need not agree to my way of thinking. The choice is entirely yours.

And by the way, have you ever noticed that a product that you buy often looks better on the packaging than the actual product? By skilful use of lighting and image editing, products are often made to look better than what they actually are. Do you think that all the beautiful scenes that you see in books are always the original? And in a movie, when you hear the sounds made by running animals, or when you see a leopard with a kill on a tree with the setting sun in the frame, do you think that all that is how it actually was?

Photography is now termed as 'digital imaging'; may be because editing is a part and parcel of it.

I could write more... much more. But I think I have made my point.

Raw to DNG

How much data will I lose if I convert a RAW file into an Adobe DNG file before I start processing it in Photoshop? Or will the DNG file retain all the data as Adobe claims?

Gustasp Irani

You will not lose any data if you convert Raw to DNG. (Even if there is a loss, the loss would be imperceptible).

I am sure some readers would like to know as to why some photographers want to convert their Raw files to DNG. Raw is a proprietary format (meaning that the data used in it is a secret of the manufacturer) while DNG (Digital Negative) is an open format. Some people worry that if the manufacturers stop the Raw format, they will be stuck with images which they will no longer be able to open. Since DNG is an 'open' format, they feel safer to convert their Raw files to DNG, just in case.

Swaying Rice Fields

I am from Kerala. I want to create a picture in which the rice fields seem to sway in the breeze. Any suggestions?

Thomas Mathew, Palakkad, Kerala

On a day which is not too bright, set your camera to its lowest ISO (say ISO 100). Set the shutter speed to say 1 second (either in Manual exposure mode or Shutter Priority mode). The camera will suggest a narrow aperture (like f/11 or f/16, depending on the brightness of the available light). Frame your picture so that you have enough of the rice field in the foreground. Try various compositions, including verticals. Take the shots when the breeze sways the rice fields. You may also try using other shutter speeds closer to 1 second.

P or iA?

On my camera I have on the Mode Dial, a 'P' as well as 'iA'. Aren't they the same? (Pic)

A. D. Patel, Surat.

They are quite similar but at the same time, a bit different. 'P' stands for Program. In this mode, the camera automatically sets the aperture as well as the shutter speed for the lighting condition and the ISO sensitivity that you have set. In 'iA' (Intelligent Auto) mode, the camera 'takes over' completely; it even sets the required ISO! Further, iA mode may even examine the scene for brightness and contrast, check if there are human faces in the scene (so that the focus may be set at that point) and select an exposure from 'presets' already stored in the camera. So you see, both these modes are 'auto', but 'iA' takes the automation to the next level.

In my opinion, the 'iA' mode is designed for absolute beginners (but believe me, I too use it at times!). |SP





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As told to **Rohinton Mehta**



Yasir Mehmood

Yasir Mehmood – a designer from Islamabad, Pakistan, is a passionate nature and wildlife photographer. He is a creative person and an art lover. His creative journey began in 2009 when he bought his first D-SLR – an Olympus E-410. Being a designer, he is fond of creating new colour combinations and design patterns, which he observes in insects and other tiny creatures.

Says Yasir, "I observe insects as objects of beauty, who are as beautiful as any other element of nature and worthy of being photographed. For me, photography is not just a hobby; rather it is a tool of insight into nature". Yasir does not have any sophisticated equipment and yet, his images are awesome.

Yasir can be contacted at yasirmehamood@gmail.com

Facebook:https://www.facebook.com/yasirwildlifephotographer

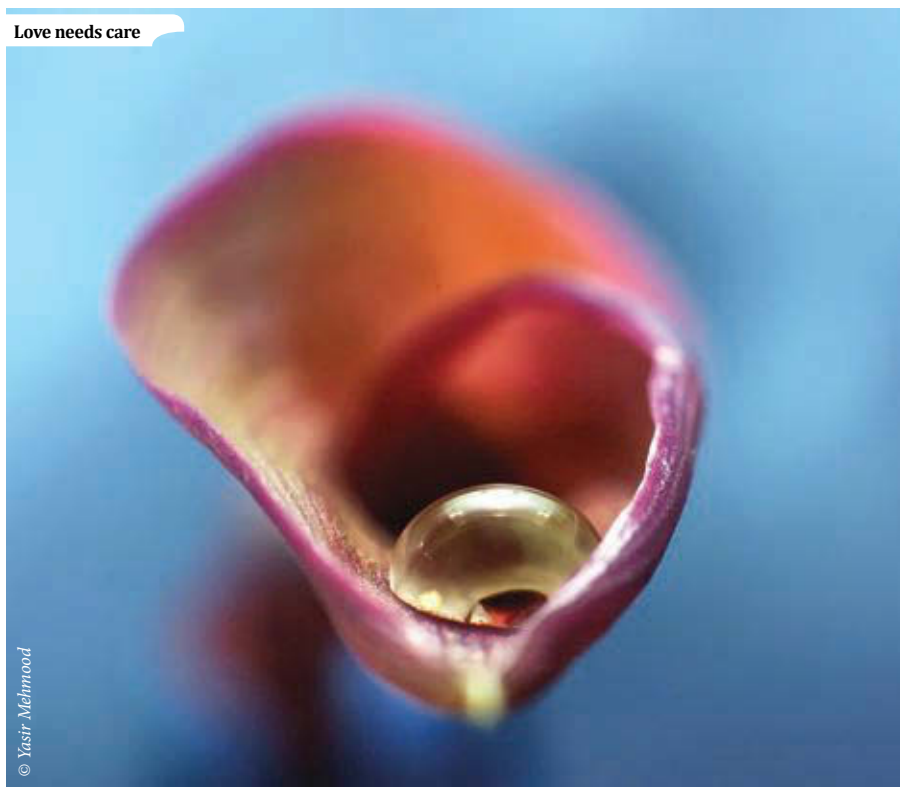


Damselfly

© Yasir Mehmood

You have an eye for things small and beautiful. For the benefit of those who feel that they are limited by their equipment, tell us what equipment do you use? And how do you manage to get your required depth of field?
My equipment is very modest. I use a Nikon D5200 body with a Sigma 70-300mm lens. I don't have a dedicated macro lens as yet but I wish to buy a Sigma 150mm f/2.8 macro in the near future. Shooting with the 70-300mm and extension tubes allow me greater working distance between the lens and the subject, which helps to improve on the depth of field. I also try and use narrow apertures like f/11 or f/14. I generally use the Manual exposure mode with a tripod and a shutter release cable, which further helps to avoid camera shake.

When I need more light, I use a Chinese flash-gun with a home-made diffuser that I have built using a plastic bottle, black card paper and reflectors. The diffuser is necessary as some subjects are reflective and the flash light can cause some areas of the subject to overexpose. I use a tripod most of the times but when I want to move quickly, I avoid it.



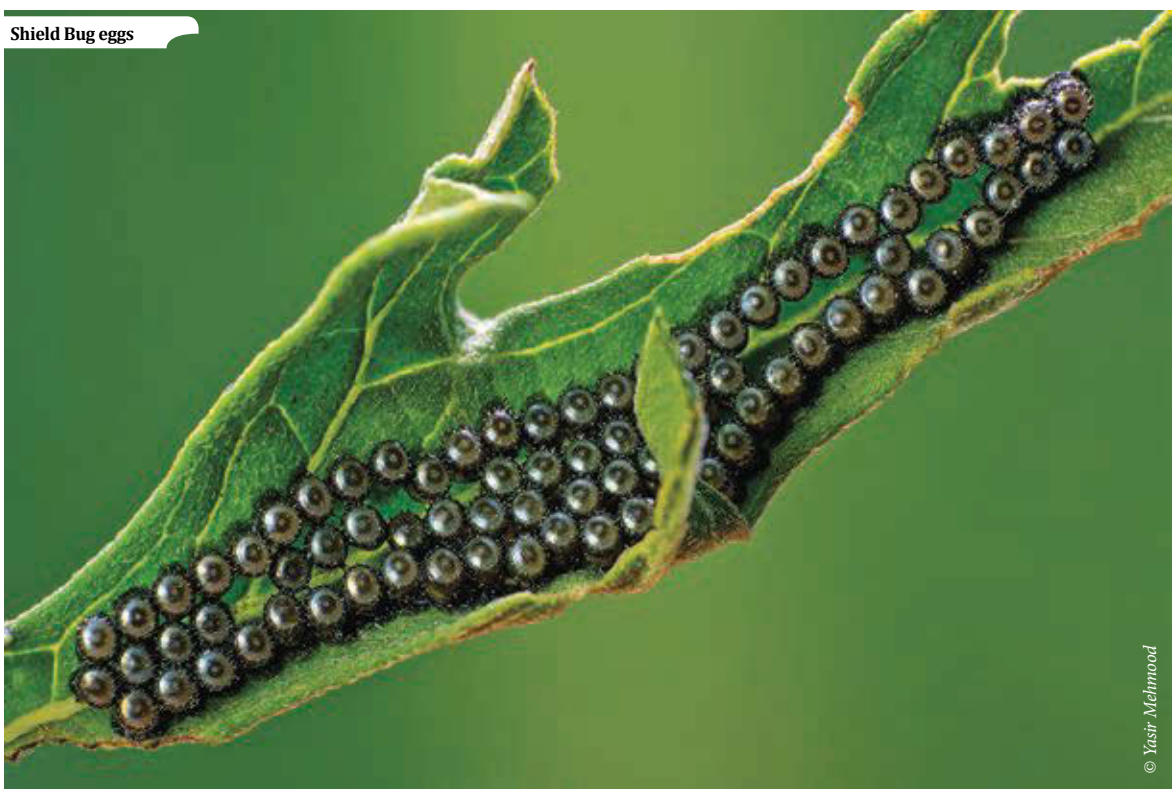
Love needs care

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Escaping a trap

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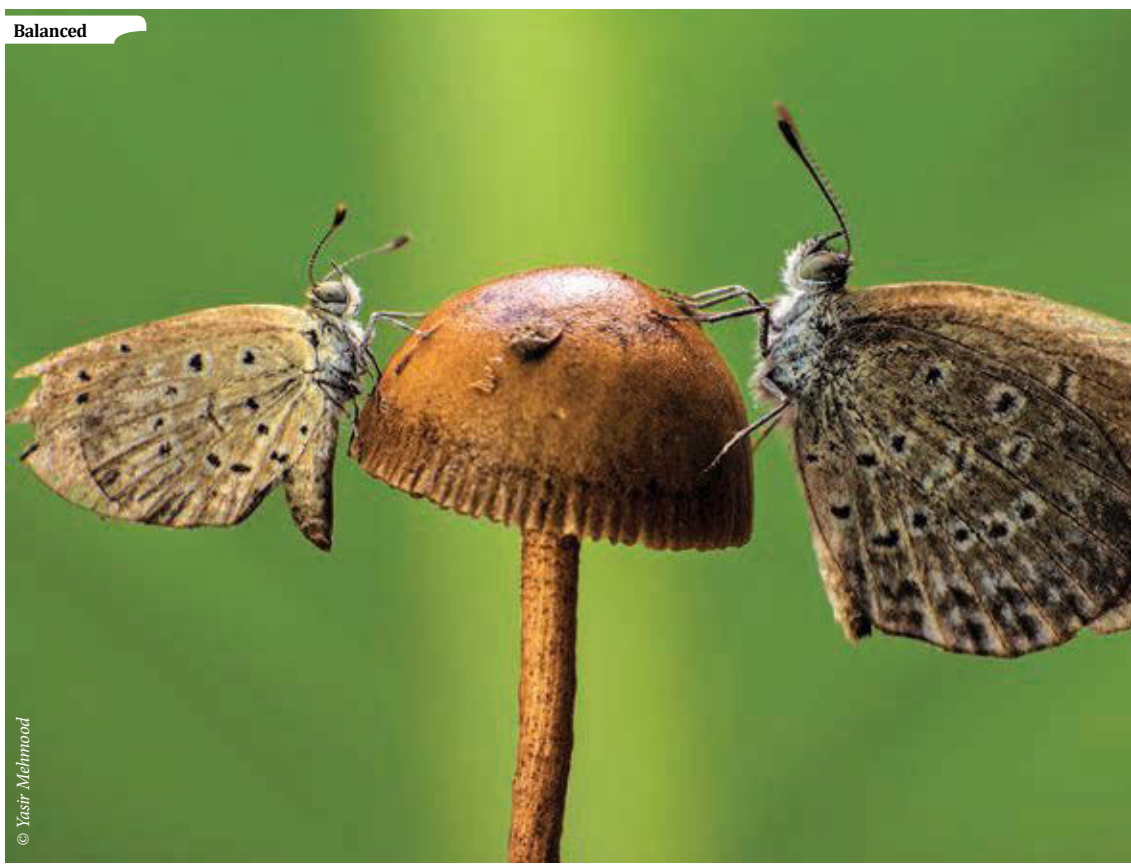
Shield Bug eggs

© Yasir Mehmood



Attitude





Balanced


Conversation
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The drop of life
© Yasir Mehmood



Friendship





Leaf-eating Caterpillar



Surfing the golden path - Ladybird



Motherly love



Baby Bat

What is your shooting technique?
As you must be aware, besides the subject, the background plays an important role. In nature, it is often very difficult to get a suitable background. To get a natural-looking background, I often use a large leaf, which can easily cover my small subjects.

My camera body + 70-300mm lens + the extension tubes means that the combo is heavy. Hence, as I mentioned earlier, I use a tripod and a remote release to avoid blurry images. I also wait for the breeze to die down before taking the shots. I shoot in Raw, and do the basic editing like colour corrections using Photoshop CS6.

What inspired you to pursue macro photography?
As a designer, I love colour combinations and designs. Insects – the tiny creations of God – are marvelous in their colour combinations and patterns. I try to capture every tiny movement of such insects, which are an emblem of beauty. The beautiful colours, their design and their movement shows how organised their world is.

I would like to inspire people through the beauty of insects. As normal human eyes cannot capture these things, I would like to show these colourful insects to people through my photographs.

Tell us about your most satisfying achievements in this genre of photography.
One of my pictures was selected in Pakistan's top 50 photographers' list. I also had a picture accepted in a Nikon competition. A picture was also published in Photographic Art Society of Pakistan year book. My pictures have also been published in different international magazines like Camerapixo (5 times) and once on its cover, Wild Sojurns (India), Practical Photography (UK), SHOT!, Life Force and I Am Zain have carried my pictures. Another picture was selected for the 'My World in Monochrome' contest organised by 'The Photographic Art Society of Pakistan'. I am also active on the National Geographic profile with pictures published in 'Daily Dozen'.

What advice would you like to give budding macro photographers?
If you want to achieve success in macro photography, be patient. This is the only way! You need to understand the limits of your equipment as well as the nature of insects. If you treat them like friends, then they will cooperate with you.

If you don't have a macro lens, just buy extension tubes. It's a good and cheap way to get closer to your subjects. Always use a tripod and take care of the background. Rely on your own passion and patience. |SP

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KINGFISHER
Calendar 2016





Atul Kasbekar

For the 2016 edition we were caught in a cyclone for straight ten days. So more time was spent cooped under tents on supposedly the best beaches in the world than in actual shooting. The gorgeous images of the 2016 edition are testimony to the genius and the patience of my crew (**Kapil Bhalla** - makeup, **Richard Wilkinson** - hair, **Allia El Rufai** - stylist) and of course, the photographer.

AISHA SHARMA

It's an absolute privilege to be a part of the Kingfisher Calendar 2016 and the lineage that Kingfisher boasts of . It's been a unique experience. Personally for me, I haven't ever done a shoot in swimwear. It was an unexplored territory, which was both challenging and very exciting. Kingfisher is a huge platform and I am glad I got an opportunity to be a part of it.

A huge reason for Kingfisher Calendar to be what it is today is because of the man behind it all, Atul Kasbekar. He is someone who is very passionate for what he does and it's been an absolute privilege to shoot with him. The weather conditions were challenging, to say the least, and he is someone who still managed to create something magical like he has been doing since so many years. I am proud and very happy to be a part of the Kingfisher Calendar 2016.



KINGFISHER
Calendar 2016



SUSHRII MISHRA

Shooting for the Kingfisher Calendar was never in my plan because I always thought that the girls who are chosen for the calendar are incredibly gorgeous with lots of oomph and killer attitude. It is like being the Victoria's Secret model of India and I never saw myself there.

But having said that, shooting with Atul Kasbekar was a dream for me and it was one of the things in my life bucket list. I went for the audition and the next thing I know is that I'm getting a call that I've made it and all I could do was scream and laugh. I just could not believe it. It was all like a dream even when we reached Seychelles. Omg! That place was unbelievably stunning.

We went to such beautiful locations. I just couldn't believe that all these amazing things were happening to me. The entire team was fabulous. Everyone was so warm and so helpful throughout the shoot. All the girls were amazing too. All of us bonded so well. It was just like a family and I miss all of them.

There would be days when I was shooting, and it would be raining cats and dogs. All of us would wait for it to stop. And when it did, even if it was for 10 minutes, all of us would get on our toes as if we had some super power to get the shoot done. In a shot, I had to pose in the middle of the waves. It was really difficult because each time I would pose, I was thrown away by the strong currents. I was hammered by the sea, but I wanted to keep going. The entire team was so supportive and then finally at the end of the shot, Atul said we had just created magic. Now I just cannot wait for the calendar to be launched.

Kingfisher Calendar was probably the best experience of my life and it's etched so warmly in my heart that I will always cherish it forever.



KINGFISHER
Calendar 2016



NOYONITA LODH

Shooting with Atul Kasbekar has always been on my wish list. The Kingfisher Calendar 2016 shoot in Seychelles was an absolutely thrilling experience.

Apart from sweating it at the gym to maintaining a great body for the shoot, the entire experience was nothing less than a luxurious holiday spent with a great team. They made sure that I looked beautiful and felt extremely comfortable in those stunning bikinis. Needless to say, the Kingfisher Calendar truly lives up to its name, thanks to the wonderful experience in the unbelievable locales of Seychelles with a fun team and a photographer, who blows your mind with his photography skills!



KINGFISHER
Calendar 2016



MAYA HENDRICKS

Working on the Kingfisher calendar was an experience I will never forget. From exploring a continent that was entirely new to learning the ropes behind how the calendar works, I feel fully equipped to tackle an array of tasks that might come my way. I especially enjoyed working with the patient, hard working and supremely talented team of the Kingfisher Calendar especially the awesome Atul Kasbekar.

Being the youngest one on the team, it was important for me to be attentive, watch the other more experienced models, and quickly be able to switch between hosting the NDTV show and modelling.

I cannot express how grateful I am to be one of the lucky girls to represent the Kingfisher Calendar, and on top of that as an aspiring actress, I was able to host a show before I was 20 years old. The mesmerising location added to my inspiration as an artist as well, and I am forever grateful for the gorgeous memories from that trip!

SPECIAL FEATURE

KINGFISHER
Calendar 2016



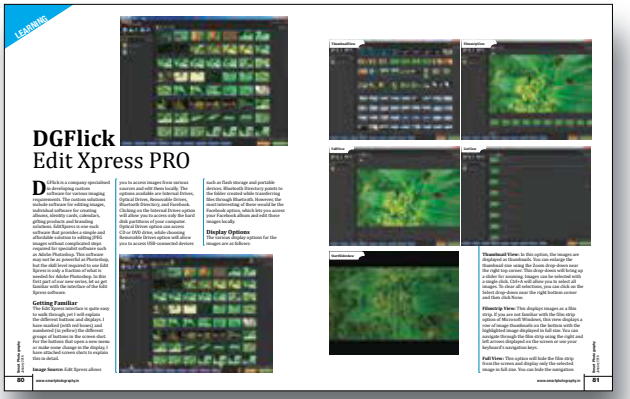
AISHWARYA SUSHMITA

From the time of getting selected for the Kingfisher Supermodel to shooting for the KF calendar, it has truly been an amazing experience. The whole crew has been very supportive and we bonded really well. Working with Atul, who has been the real force behind the calendar, was a pleasurable experience. He is a complete professional and makes you feel at ease and also gets the best out of you. I would like to give special thanks to Kapil Bhalla, who creates magic with his brush and Richard Wilkinson for my hair. I feel the Kingfisher Calendar is just the beginning and an ideal start for a long journey ahead. |SP



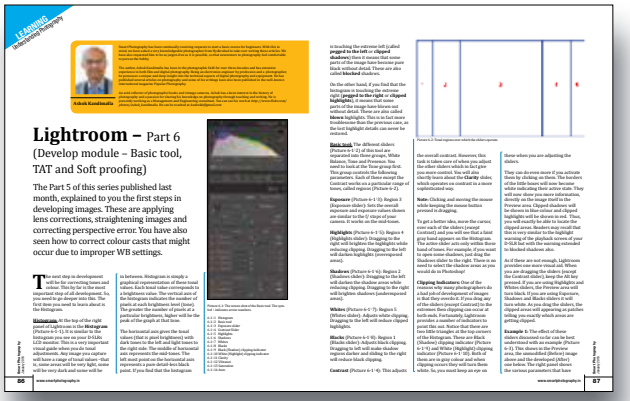
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White Balance



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DGFlick Edit Xpress PRO



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Lightroom – Part 6

Learnings

WHITE BALANCE

Rohinton Mehta

Setting proper White Balance (WB) is very important if you want your images to be without any unwanted colour cast. I'm sure most photographers know this and yet, either out of sheer carelessness or with utter disregard, many photographers continue to take pictures without paying due attention to this very important camera setting. In this write-up, in the form of questions and answers, we aim to set things right.

What exactly is White Balance?
White Balance (WB) is a setting within our digital cameras that helps in eliminating unwanted colour casts in our photos.

But why is it called 'White' Balance?
It is an accepted fact that if white objects in our photos appear white – that is, without any other colour maligning its whiteness – then all other colours will appear 'correct', without any colour cast. In other words, the scene would appear 'neutral'.

But, why can't the camera, by itself, give us 'proper' colours?
The colours that we see in our photos are dependent on the colours of the surrounding light. As an example, if we were to use two coloured lights – say, one blue and the other red – and light up a portrait with these lights, we would have a portrait with one side of the face blue and the other red! Remember, whatever is the colour of the light, is the colour of the photo.



The left side is lit with blue light; the right with red.

Let's take this a bit further. You are photographing this beautiful white statue, outdoors. You take two shots – one in the afternoon and the other in the late evening. The afternoon shot will show the statue as white, but the late evening shot of the same white statue will be yellowish-orange. Why does this happen? Simple. The late evening light is yellowish-orange. Remember? Whatever is the colour of the light, is the colour of the final photo.

Outdoor shot (simulated)





Late evening shot (simulated)

It is also important to realise that our brain and eyes compensate to see a white object as white even under coloured lights. Look at a white object using say, an orange filter. As soon as you bring the filter up to your eye, momentarily – for a split second – the white object will appear orange but by the next split second, it will appear as white. That's enough proof that our brain and eyes compensate for the colour of the light.

Okay. But we are told that setting proper WB is not important if we shoot in Raw. Isn't that correct?
Yes and No! It is a fact that with Raw files we can change the WB during post-processing in an image editing program, like Photoshop. But my question to you is, why do you want to start with a wrong WB? How can you be sure that the WB that you now set is correct for the scene that you saw before your eyes when you took the picture? I see you saying "Oh, I perfectly remember the colours when I photographed the scene". Pardon me for being blunt, but if you say so, you are fooling yourself! There are over 10,000 shades of green in nature, over 7,000 shades of blue and similarly, with other colours. It is impossible to correctly remember the colours you saw, days or months ago.

On the other hand, if you start your image processing with the correct WB, you have one less thing to worry about. Also, it is easier to add colours (for your personal likes) but it is difficult to get rid of unwanted colours.
Note: I am assuming that your computer monitor is calibrated/profiled and displaying consistent colours.

Of course if you are shooting in JPEG, then you don't have an opportunity to change the WB in post-processing. WB, along with other parameters like colour saturation, sharpness and contrast, are baked into the JPEG file. Hence it makes sense to set the correct WB at all times. One may argue that an accomplished Photoshop user can adjust the colours to his liking even with a JPEG file. Granted, but are you 'that' accomplished Photoshop user? And even if you are, why create more work for yourself?

So how do I set a proper WB on my camera?
Simple. Digital cameras have a dial or other means (through the Menu) to set a WB according to the lighting condition. For example, if you are shooting in sunlight, you set the WB to 'Sunlight' ('Daylight'). If the subject is under shade, set the WB to 'Shade'. If the subject is under cloudy lighting conditions, you set the WB to 'Cloudy'. So also with other lighting conditions like when the subject is under tungsten or fluorescent illumination.



Various White Balance settings on a Canon EOS 6D

There is this setting called Auto White Balance on my camera. How does it work and can I rely on it?
Ideally, as the colour of light changes, you should also change the WB setting on your camera as explained above. But photographers are forgetful people (sometimes they are even negligent!). Since you may forget to change the WB setting as dictated by the lighting conditions, camera manufacturers provide an easy solution, known as Auto White Balance (AWB). When set, this setting takes care of the varying lighting conditions and automatically sets your camera's WB.

On modern cameras, the AWB setting is pretty reliable under most lighting conditions, but not all. AWB is designed to work within a specific range of Kelvin temperatures. Depending on the make and model of your camera, AWB may work just fine between, say, 3,200K and 7,000K. This range may take care of most lighting situations but what if you are photographing in a room lit by incandescent lights (2800K) or on a high mountain where the Kelvin temperature could be above 8,000K? Obviously, under such conditions, AWB will not work well

Okay, I get it. But what is this Custom White Balance setting that I see on my camera?
Under difficult lighting conditions (example – mixed lighting), or when extra accuracy is desired, Custom White Balance (CWB) could be used. *The method to set CWB may differ between makes/models of cameras. Please check your user manual.*

For Canon cameras
a) Keep a white card or Kodak 18% grey card ready (The 18% grey card reflects equal amounts of red, green and blue). I suggest you set your camera to an 'average' exposure setting like f/8 and 1/60sec at ISO 100.

b) Take a frame-filling photo of the white card/18% grey card in the lighting for which you want to set the CWB.
c) Go to the Custom White Balance option in the Menu and press SET.

d) Press OK.

For Nikon cameras (On some Nikon cameras, the method is slightly different)
a) Keep a white card or Kodak 18% grey card ready. I suggest you set your camera to an 'average' exposure setting like f/8 and 1/60sec at ISO 100.

b) Along with the marked WB settings (Daylight, Shade, Cloudy, etc) on your camera, you will see letters PRE which stand for Preset Manual. Navigate to this PRE setting and press the WB button till PRE start to flash. Now point the camera to the white card/18% grey card, fill the frame, and take a shot When you do so, the picture will not be recorded, but the camera will record the colour of the light. This setting can be stored (please refer your user manual).

Note 1: PRE will flash only for 6 seconds. You must take the shot within this time. If PRE stops blinking, press the WB button again till PRE starts blinking and repeat the procedure.

Note 2: If the camera has achieved the correct WB, 'Good' will be displayed on the top LCD panel. If the camera fails to achieve the correct WB, 'No good' will be displayed. This could happen if you have set a very fast shutter speed



Auto White Balance selected

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and/or very narrow aperture set when starting the procedure. This is why I suggested the exposure mentioned earlier.

Note 3: If the lighting conditions change during your shoot, repeat the procedure for a new CWB, which can also be stored separately from the earlier CWB.

Note 4: If you do not store the CWB, the earlier CWB will be overridden by the new CWB.

About Mixed Lighting

Under mixed lighting, it can be a nightmare to achieve perfect colours. If the area in which you are photographing has varying coloured light sources, it is impossible to achieve correct WB for all the light sources at the same time. In such cases, decide on the most prominent light source, or the source that is covering the largest area of the room in question and proceed to acquire the correct WB for that source. Obviously, the areas lit with the remaining coloured lights will exhibit colour casts.

Is there any other way to set the WB?

Yes. If you know the Kelvin temperature of the light that is illuminating your subject, you can set the Kelvin temperature directly on your camera, if the camera has this feature. Light meters that read in degrees Kelvin are available, if needed.

You could also use a White Balance filter (like the ExpoDisc) to set accurate WB on your camera. After setting the camera for a Custom White Balance, hold the filter in front of the lens and point the lens to the light source and take a shot. The image will not be recorded, but the colour of the light will store the reading.

Note: Under strong sun, it is desirable not to point the lens at the sun. Take the reading nearest to the sun but without including the sun.



Expodisc White Balance filter

What exactly is Kelvin temperature?

Just as we have Celsius and Fahrenheit scales that measure temperature, the Kelvin temperature scale is used to measure the colour of light.

I don't get it. How can you measure 'colour' of light?

Yes, this calls for some explanation (which I shall try to over-simplify). Let's say that you have a cube of iron (which, in physics, is referred to as a 'black body') which you want to heat. As the iron heats, we see different colours in the heated iron. First it glows red, then orange, then yellow and then blue before it melts. The Kelvin scale provides a numerical value to each of those colours so that when you mention a particular Kelvin temperature, you know what the colour of the heated black body would be.

At 1500K, the colour emitted by the heated black body would be yellowish, which is compared to the yellow of a candle flame. At 5500K, the colour emitted by the heated black body would be similar to the colour we see at around noon. Between 9000 - 10,000K, the colour emitted by the black body would be similar to the colour of north blue sky.

So, the Kelvin scale allows us to compare the colours we see on a daily basis, to the colours that would be emitted by a heated black body at different temperatures.

I am curious to know what changes take place within the camera as you change the WB settings? Putting it another way, how does the camera change the WB?

To understand how the camera manages to get you accurate colours in spite of the light being coloured, try this out. Take a white LED torchlight and cover the front with a blue gel. If you put the switch 'on', the emitted light will be blue. Focus the light on a white paper and take a photo of that spot light. The spot will be blue. Now repeat the shot but this time place a yellow coloured filter on your camera lens. What happens? The blue and yellow light cancel out each other and the spot will no longer be blue (assuming that the correct density of the yellow filter is used).

A similar thing happens in a digital camera. Let's say that you are photographing in a room lit by household bulbs (incandescent light). These bulbs emit yellow light and so your photos will have a yellow colour cast. When you set the camera's WB to 'incandescent', the camera places a virtual blue filter on the lens (virtual, not physical) to counteract the yellow light of the bulbs, thus giving you a neutral image without any colour cast.

Important note: If you set the WB to 'incandescent' for example, the camera assumes that the light is yellow. But if the light is not really yellow, the camera has no way of knowing that. It will assume that it is yellow and will place a virtual blue filter in the light path, thus making your picture blue. This little trick could be used to your advantage if you want to create a moonlight effect during the day time.

Is there anything else that I need to know about the WB settings on my camera?

Yes. And this is very important. Generally, low Kelvin temperatures indicate 'warm' colours, while high Kelvin temperatures mean 'cool' colours. But on the camera, things are reversed. If you set your camera to a low Kelvin setting (say, 3000K), images will turn out 'colder' (blue-ish); setting the camera to a high Kelvin setting (say,7000K), images will turn out 'warmer'.

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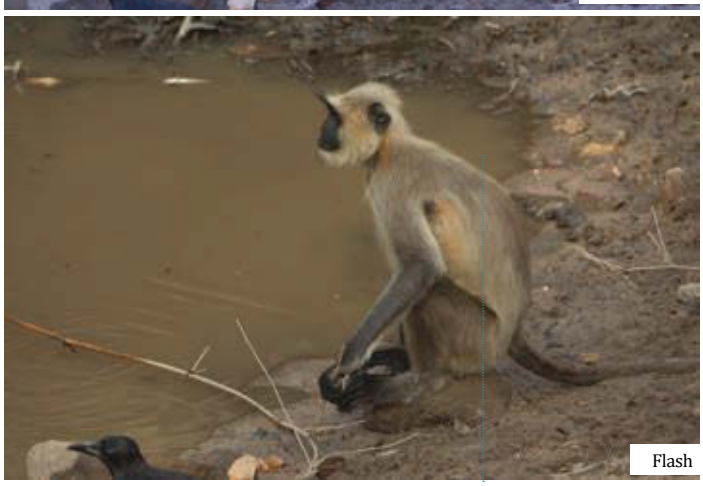

Daylight


Cloudy


Shade


Tungsten


Flourescent


Flash

Same subject, different White Balance settings

Why is this so?
As explained earlier, to counteract the effect of coloured light, the digital camera uses a virtual filter of the opposite colour and density. Yellow-ish light (which is actually 'low' on the Kelvin scale) needs a blue filter (which is actually 'high' on the Kelvin scale) to counteract. Hence the camera is designed to apply the opposite filtration. |**SP**

CONCLUSION

I trust that the concept of White Balance is now clear. To re-cap, it is better to set your digital camera to the proper WB rather than leaving it on Auto WB. And this assumes greater importance if you are shooting in JPEG. This also lets you start your editing workflow with one less parameter to worry about. Remember, it is easier to add colours (for aesthetic reasons) but difficult to get rid of wrong colours. Get into the habit of doing things the right way.

Happy Shooting!

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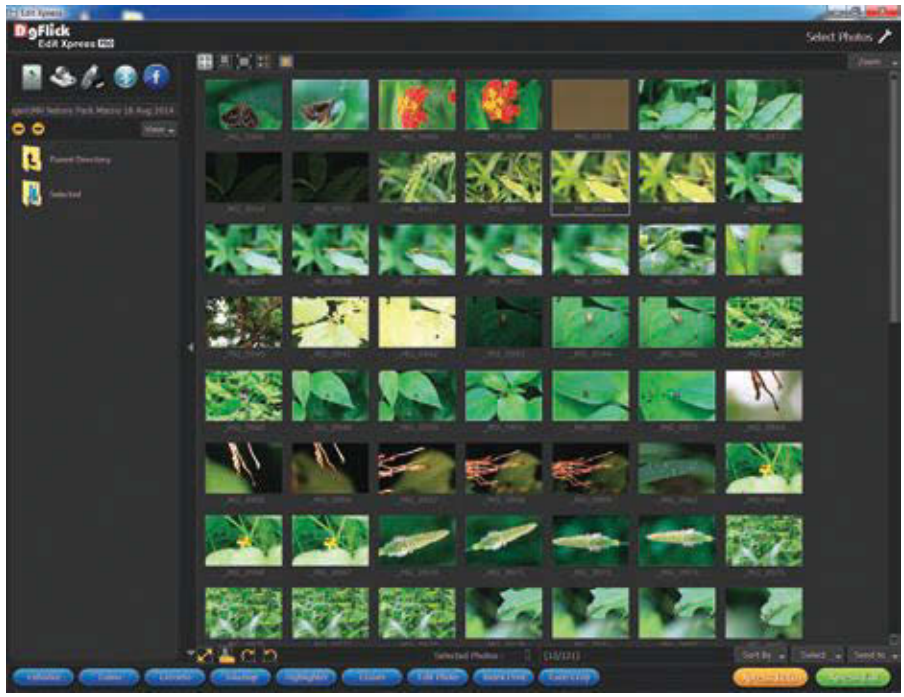
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DGFlick Edit Xpress PRO

DGFlick is a company specialised in developing custom software for various imaging requirements. The custom solutions include software for editing images, individual software for creating albums, identity cards, calendars, gifting products and branding solutions. EditXpress is one such software that provides a simple and affordable solution to editing JPEG images without complicated steps required for specialist software such as Adobe Photoshop. This software may not be as powerful as Photoshop, but the skill level required to use Edit Xpress is only a fraction of what is needed for Adobe Photoshop. In this first part of our new series, let us get familiar with the interface of the Edit Xpress software.

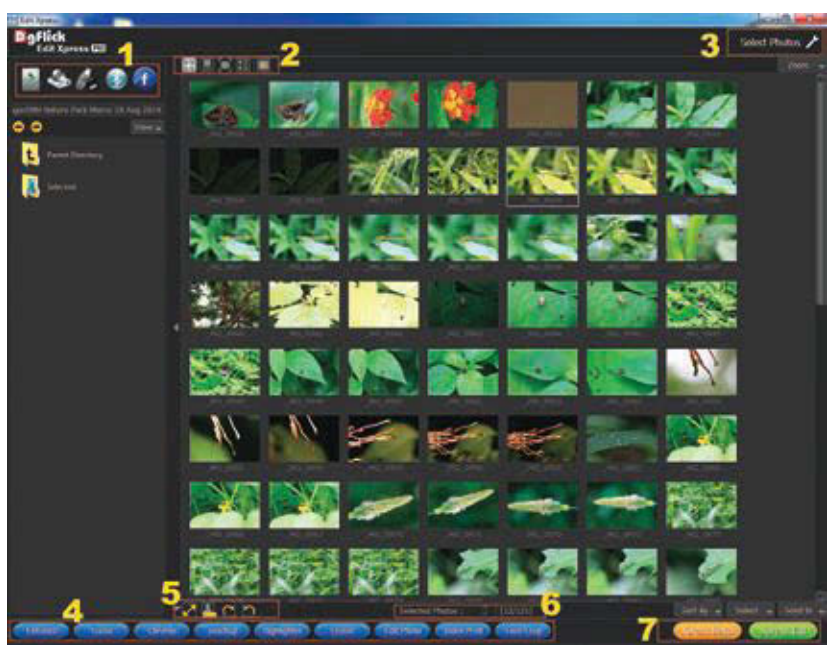
Getting Familiar

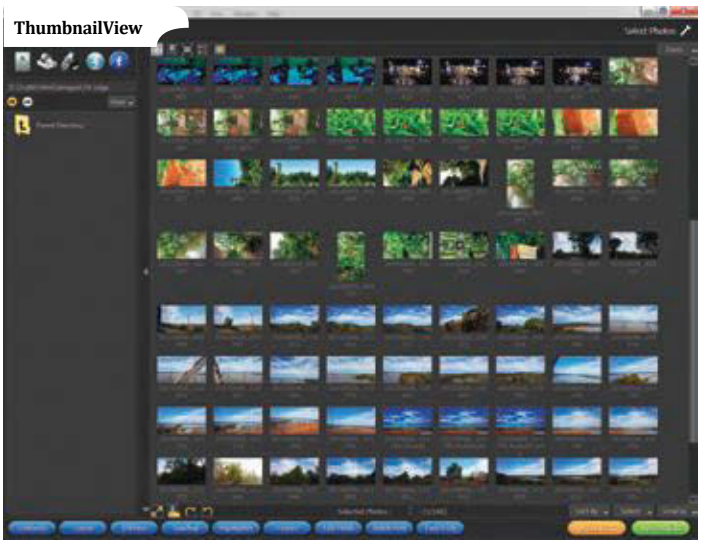
The Edit Xpress interface is quite easy to walk through, yet I will explain the different buttons and displays. I have marked (with red boxes) and numbered (in yellow) the different groups of buttons in the screen shot. For the buttons that open a new menu or make some change in the display, I have attached screen shots to explain this in detail.

Image Source: Edit Xpress allows you to access images from various sources and edit them locally. The options available are Internal Drives, Optical Drives, Removable Drives, Bluetooth Directory, and Facebook. Clicking on the Internal Drives option will allow you to access only the hard disk partitions of your computer. Optical Drives option can access CD or DVD drive, while choosing Removable Drives option will allow you to access USB-connected devices such as flash storage and portable devices. Bluetooth Directory points to the folder created while transferring files through Bluetooth. However, the most interesting of these would be the Facebook option, which lets you access your Facebook album and edit those images locally.

Display Options

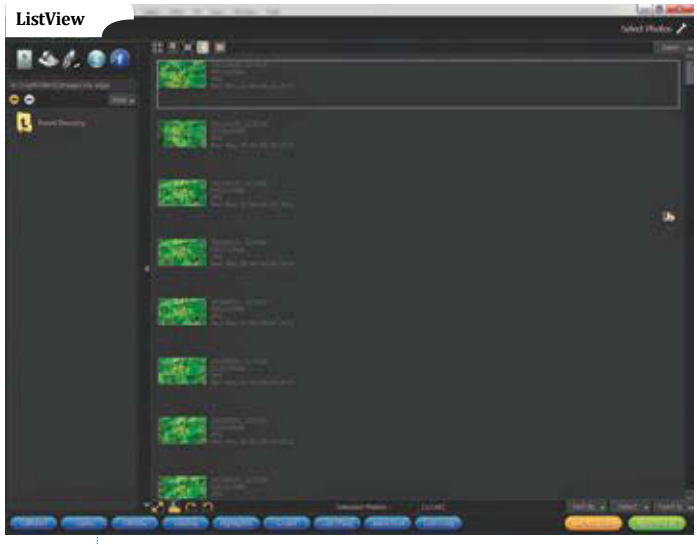
The various display options for the images are as follows:













Thumbnail View: In this option, the images are displayed as thumbnails. You can enlarge the thumbnail size using the Zoom drop-down near the right top corner. This drop-down will bring up a slider for zooming. Images can be selected with a single click. Ctrl+A will allow you to select all images. To clear all selections, you can click on the Select drop-down near the right bottom corner and then click None.

Filmstrip View: This displays images as a film strip. If you are not familiar with the film strip option of Microsoft Windows, this view displays a row of image thumbnails on the bottom with the highlighted image displayed in full size. You can navigate through the film strip using the right and left arrows displayed on the screen or use your keyboard's navigation keys.

Full View: This option will hide the film strip from the screen and display only the selected image in full size. You can hide the navigation

panel by clicking on the left arrow displayed on the screen. To select an image, you only need to click on that image. A second click will deselect it.

List View: This will display the images one below the other, in a single column. You can use the Zoom drop-down to enlarge the thumbnail. In addition to the thumbnail, List View will display the file name, pixel dimensions, file type, and time of capture.

Start Slideshow: This will start a slideshow of all selected images.

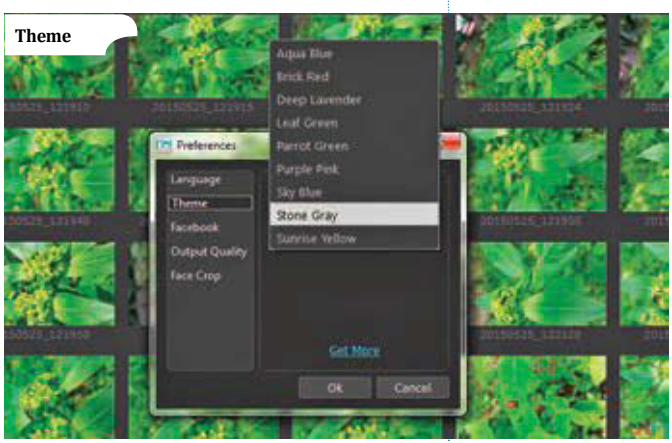
Select Photos

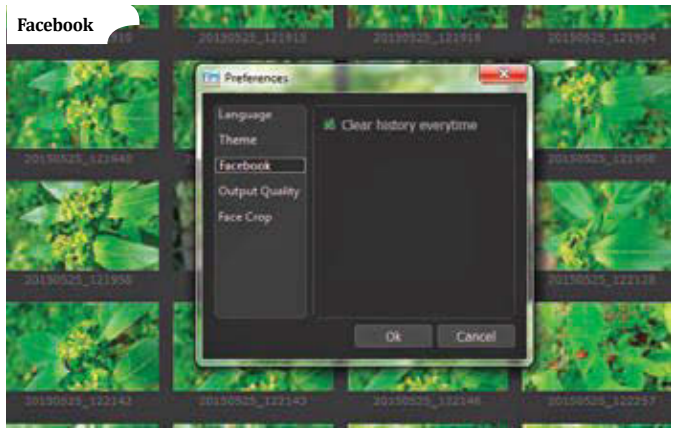
The button next to this text is where you do the settings for selecting images. The options are:

Language: This option lets you select the language of the interface. The languages included at the moment are English, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Tamil, and Telugu.

Theme: This menu allows you to choose your favourite theme. The options available are Aqua Blue, Brick Red, Deep Lavender, Leaf Green, Parrot Green, Purple Pink, Sky Blue, Stone Gray, and Sunrise Yellow. I personally prefer Stone Grey for all my editing software since it is neutral.











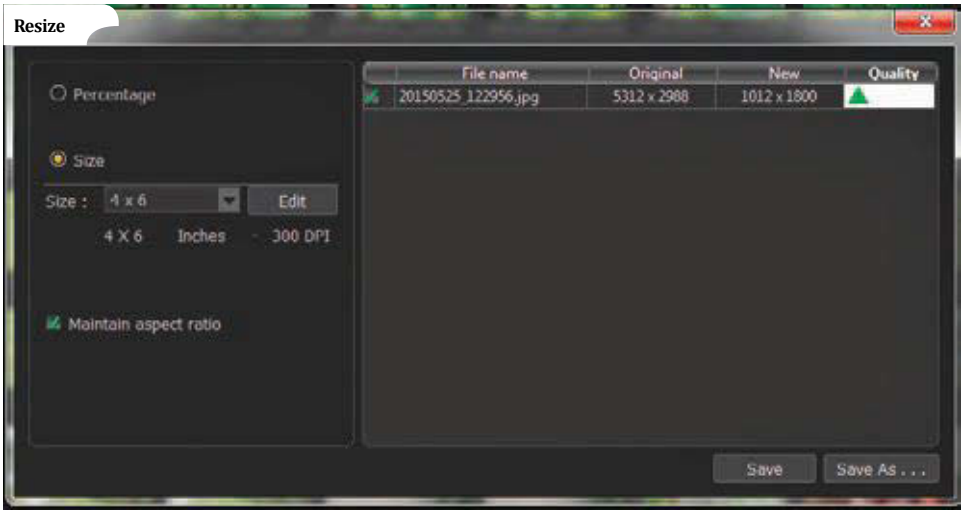
Facebook: As mentioned earlier, you can link your Facebook account with Edit Xpress. The Facebook menu provides the only option to clear history every time. It is strongly recommended that you keep this checked all the time.

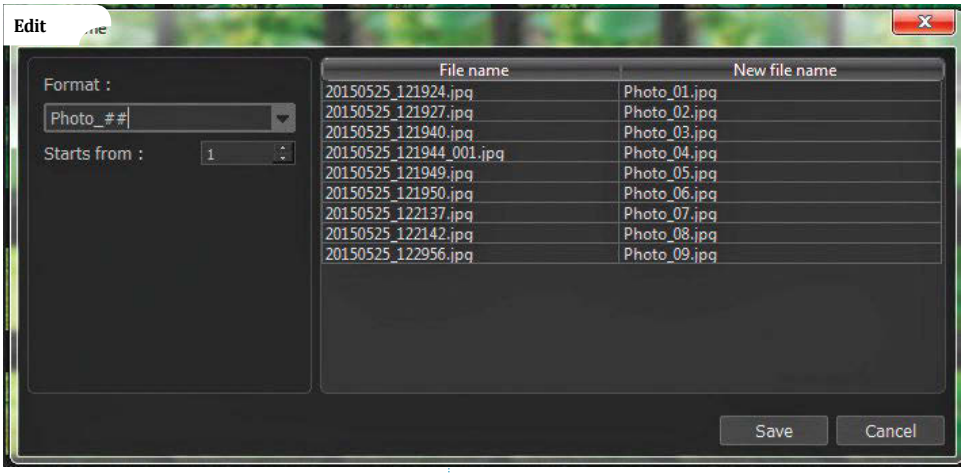
Output Quality: This is probably the most crucial of these menus. You can check the option to Maintain original quality, choose a quality from the drop-down menu, or specify the percentage to be maintained. There is also a slider to set the size (from small to large).

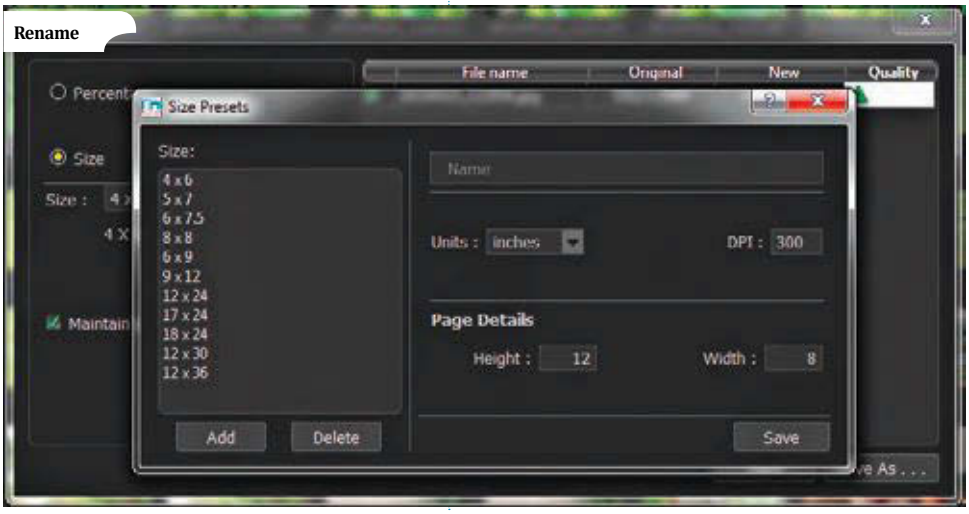
Face Crop: Edit Xpress has an intelligent system to detect faces and crop automatically in certain modes. This menu lets you select the amount of face crop to be applied. The options are Standard, Moderate, and Aggressive.

Edit Options

These are specific editing options that help you to easily edit the image. The options include Enhance, Lasso, Chroma, Touchup, Highlighter, Eraser, Edit Photo, Index Print, and Face Crop. We will learn about these in detail in subsequent issues.







Alignment and Renaming

This group of controls has four buttons—Resize, Rename, Rotate Clockwise, and Rotate Counterclockwise.

Resize: This option allows you to resize the images individually or as a batch. The new menu that pops up has options to resize it as percentage or you can choose one of the pre-set sizes from the drop-down. If you want the aspect ratio to be maintained, check the option box below the size setting.

You can also edit the pre-set sizes or add new size by clicking the Edit button. (5.2_Edit)

In this menu, you can type a name for the new size and specify the unit, size, width, and resolution in ppi (indicated as dpi).

Rename: This option lets you rename the selected files as a sequence. You can specify the file name and add a '#' symbol to include a single digit number as suffix.

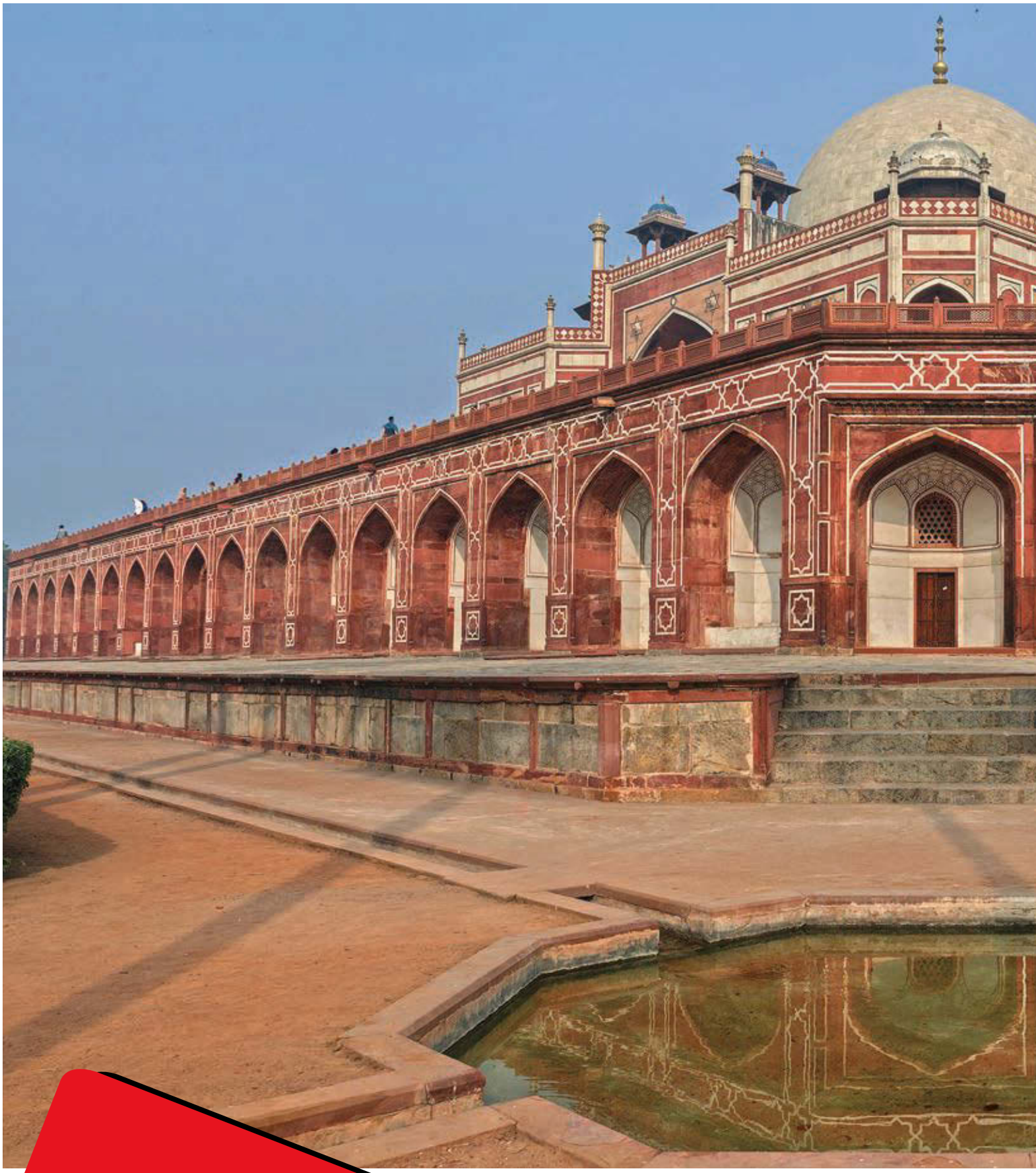
Selected Images

Edit Xpress allows you to do simple edits on images as a batch. This field shows how many images are selected in the lot.

Detailed Editing

There are two buttons here—Xpress Batch and Xpress Edit. Xpress Batch option lets you edit images as a batch. The edits performed are applied to all selected images. Xpress Edit option is the detailed Edit menu of the software and this provides extensive options for editing images.

Edit Xpress is a very light software and does not require powerful systems to support, unlike full-fledged editing suites like Photoshop. Next month, we will learn more about the software and its terrific editing options. |SP



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SMART TRAVEL CONTEST



Ashok Kandimalla

Smart Photography has been continually receiving requests to start a basic course for beginners. With this in mind, we have asked a very knowledgeable photographer from Hyderabad to take over writing these articles. We have also requested him to be as jargon-free as it is possible, so that newcomers to photography feel comfortable to pursue the hobby.

The author, Ashok Kandimalla has been in the photographic field for over three decades and has extensive experience in both film and digital photography. Being an electronics engineer by profession and a photographer, he possesses a unique and deep insight into the technical aspects of digital photography and equipment. He has published several articles on photography and some of his writings have also been published in the well-known international magazine Popular Photography.

An avid collector of photographic books and vintage cameras, Ashok has a keen interest in the history of photography and a passion for sharing his knowledge on photography through teaching and writing. He is presently working as a Management and Engineering consultant. You can see his work at *http://www.flickr.com/photos/ashok_kandimalla*. He can be reached at *kashokk@gmail.com*

Lightroom – Part 6

(Develop module – Basic tool, TAT and Soft proofing)

The Part 5 of this series published last month, explained to you the first steps in developing images. These are applying lens corrections, straightening images and correcting perspective error. You have also seen how to correct colour casts that might occur due to improper WB settings.



Picture 6-1: The screen shot of the Basic tool. The symbol ↓ indicates arrow numbers.

6-1↓1 Histogram
6-1↓2 Basic tool
6-1↓3 Exposure slider
6-1↓4 Contrast Slider
6-1↓5 Highlights
6-1↓6 Shadows
6-1↓7 Whites
6-1↓8 Blacks
6-1↓9 Black (Shadow) clipping indicator
6-1↓10 White (Highlight) clipping indicator
6-1↓11 Clarity
6-1↓12 Vibrance
6-1↓13 Saturation
6-1↓14 Auto

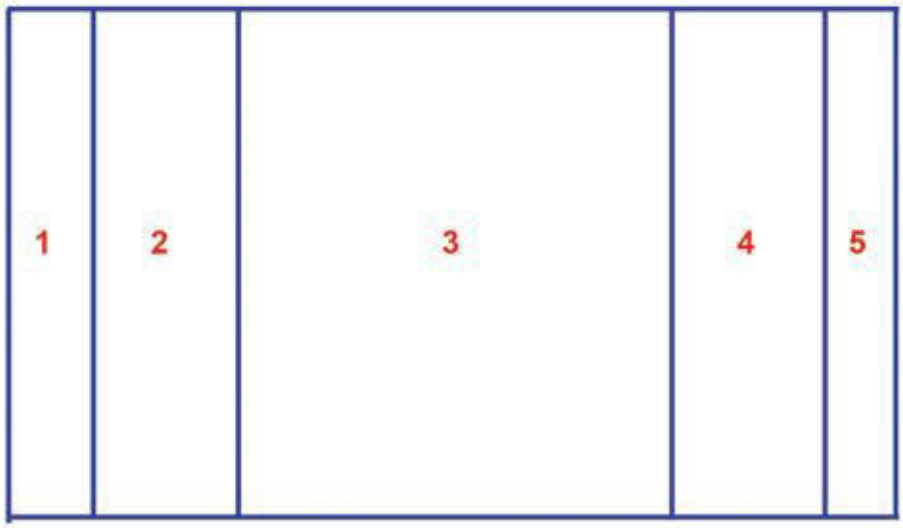
The next step in development will be for correcting tones and colour. This by far is the most important step of all development. So, you need to go deeper into this. The first item you need to learn about is the Histogram.

Histogram: At the top of the right panel of Lightroom is the **Histogram** (Picture 6-1-1). It is similar to the histogram you see on your D-SLRs LCD monitor. This is a very important visual guide when you do tonal adjustments. Any image you capture will have a range of tonal values –that is, some areas will be very light, some will be very dark and some will be in between. Histogram is simply a graphical representation of these tonal values. Each tonal value corresponds to a brightness value. The vertical axis of the histogram indicates the number of pixels at each brightness level (tone). The greater the number of pixels at a particular brightness, higher will be the peak of the graph at that tone.

The horizontal axis gives the tonal values (that is pixel brightness) with dark tones to the left and light tones to the right side. The middle of horizontal axis represents the mid-tones. The left most point on the horizontal axis represents a pure detail-less black point. If you find that the histogram

is touching the extreme left (called **pegged to the left** or **clipped shadows**) then it means that some parts of the image have become pure black without detail. These are also called **blocked** shadows.

On the other hand, if you find that the histogram is touching the extreme right (**pegged to the right** or **clipped highlights**), it means that some parts of the image have blown out without detail. These are also called **blown** highlights. This is in fact more troublesome than the previous case, as the lost highlight details can never be restored.



Picture 6-2: Tonal regions over which the sliders operate.

Basic tool: The different sliders (Picture 6-1↓2) of this tool are separated into three groups, White Balance, Tone and Presence. You need to look at the Tone group first. This group controls the following parameters. Each of these except the Contrast works on a particular range of tones, called regions (Picture 6-2).

Exposure (Picture 6-1↓3): Region 3 (Exposure slider): Sets the overall exposure and exposure values shown are similar to the f/ stops of your camera. It works on the mid-tones.

Highlights (Picture 6-1↓5): Region 4 (Highlights slider): Dragging to the right will brighten the highlights while reducing clipping. Dragging to the left will darken highlights (overexposed areas).

Shadows (Picture 6-1↓6): Region 2 (Shadows slider): Dragging to the left will darken the shadow areas while reducing clipping. Dragging to the right will brighten shadows (underexposed areas).

Whites (Picture 6-1↓7): Region 5 (Whites slider): Adjusts white clipping. Dragging to the left will reduce clipped highlights.

Blacks (Picture 6-1↓8): Region 1 (Blacks slider): Adjusts black clipping. Dragging to left will make shadow regions darker and sliding to the right will reduce black clipping.

Contrast (Picture 6-1↓4): This adjusts the overall contrast. However, this task is taken care of when you adjust the other sliders which in fact give you more control. You will also shortly learn about the **Clarity** slider, which operates on contrast in a more sophisticated way.

Note: Clicking and moving the mouse while keeping the mouse button pressed is dragging.

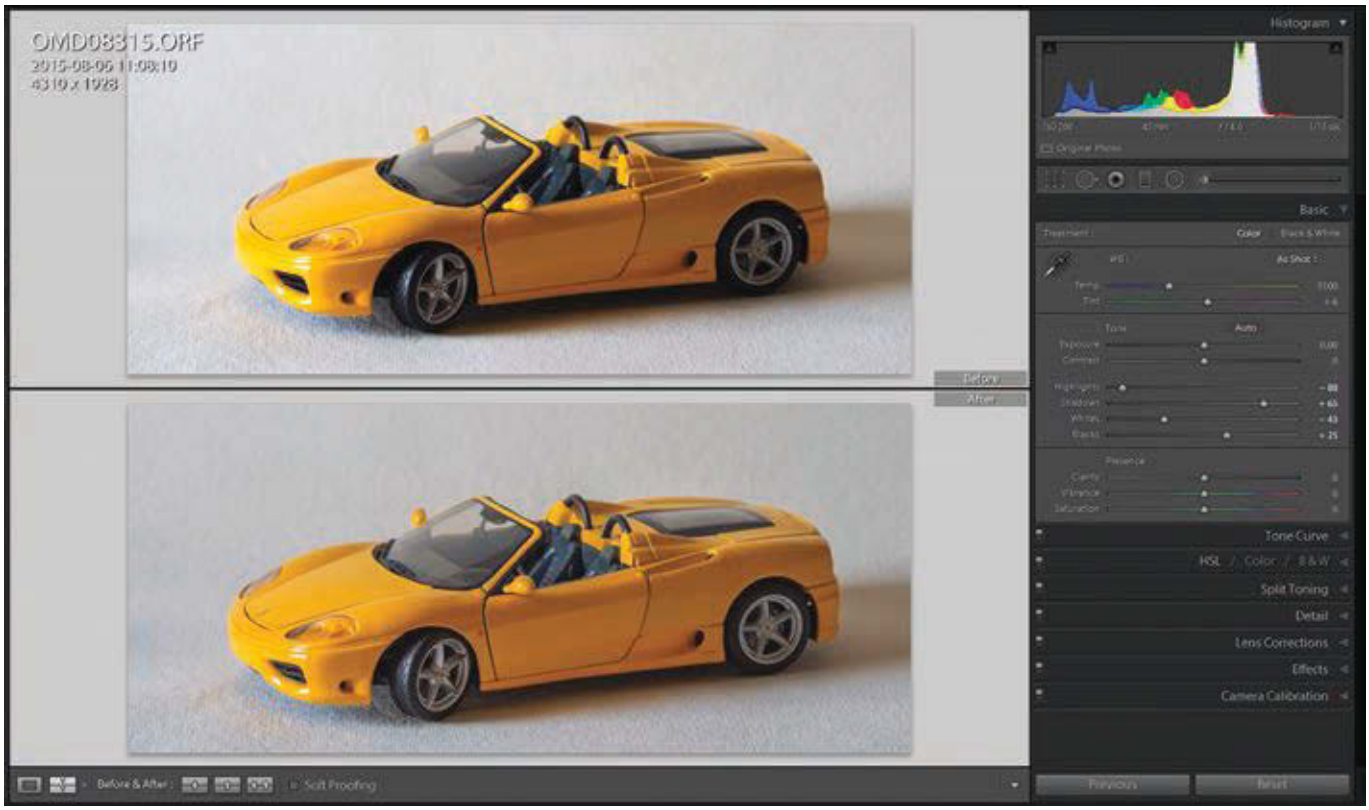
To get a better idea, move the cursor, over each of the sliders (except Contrast) and you will see that a faint gray band appears on the Histogram. The active slider acts only within those band of tones. For example, if you want to open some shadows, just drag the Shadows slider to the right. There is no need to select the shadow areas as you would do in Photoshop!

Clipping Indicators: One of the reasons why many photographers do a bad job of development of images is that they overdo it. If you drag any of the sliders (except Contrast) to the extremes then clipping can occur at both ends. Fortunately, Lightroom provides a number of indicators to point this out. Notice that there are two little triangles at the top corners of the Histogram. These are Black (Shadow) clipping indicator (Picture 6-1↓9) and White (Highlight) clipping indicator (Picture 6-1↓10). Both of them are in gray colour and when clipping occurs they will turn them white. So, you must keep an eye on these when you are adjusting the sliders.

They can do even more if you activate them by clicking on them. The borders of the little boxes will now become white indicating their active state. They will now show you more information, directly on the image itself in the Preview area. Clipped shadows will be shown in blue colour and clipped highlights will be shown in red. Thus, you will exactly be able to locate the clipped areas. Readers may recall that this is very similar to the highlight warning of the playback screen of your D-SLR but with the warning extended to blocked shadows also.

As if these are not enough, Lightroom provides one more visual aid. When you are dragging the sliders (except the Contrast slider), keep the Alt key pressed. If you are using Highlights and Whites sliders, the Preview area will turn black. If you are using Exposure, Shadows and Blacks sliders it will turn white. As you drag the sliders, the clipped areas will appearing as patches telling you exactly which areas are getting clipped.

Example 1: The effect of these sliders discussed so far can be best understood with an example (Picture 6-3). This shows in the Preview area, the unmodified (Before) image above and the developed (After) one below. The right panel shows the various parameters that have



Picture 6-3: The image at the top in the Preview area shows before and the one at the bottom shows after adjustments were done using some of the sliders in the Basic tool. The right panel shows the current development settings. These are Highlights (-) 88, Shadows, (+) 65, Whites (-) 43 and Blacks (+) 25.

been discussed so far along with their current development settings. In this photograph, a model car was placed on a textured paper. Light was from a window. First look at the unmodified image. This shows that overall exposure to be fine (as the mid-tones are proper) but the left side is bit overexposed and right hand side a little underexposed. Such an image can easily be developed using the Basic tool. First, you can use the Highlights and Whites sliders to tone down the bright areas. Next use Shadows and Blacks sliders to open up the shadows on the right and under the car. This gives more balanced tones overall, as you can see. Since the original exposure was good enough, the Exposure slider was untouched and so was the Contrast slider. The whole operation took less than three minutes!

You are now ready to go to the next part of the Basic tool, the Presence group. This is where a lot of magic happens. This group controls three parameters which are described below:

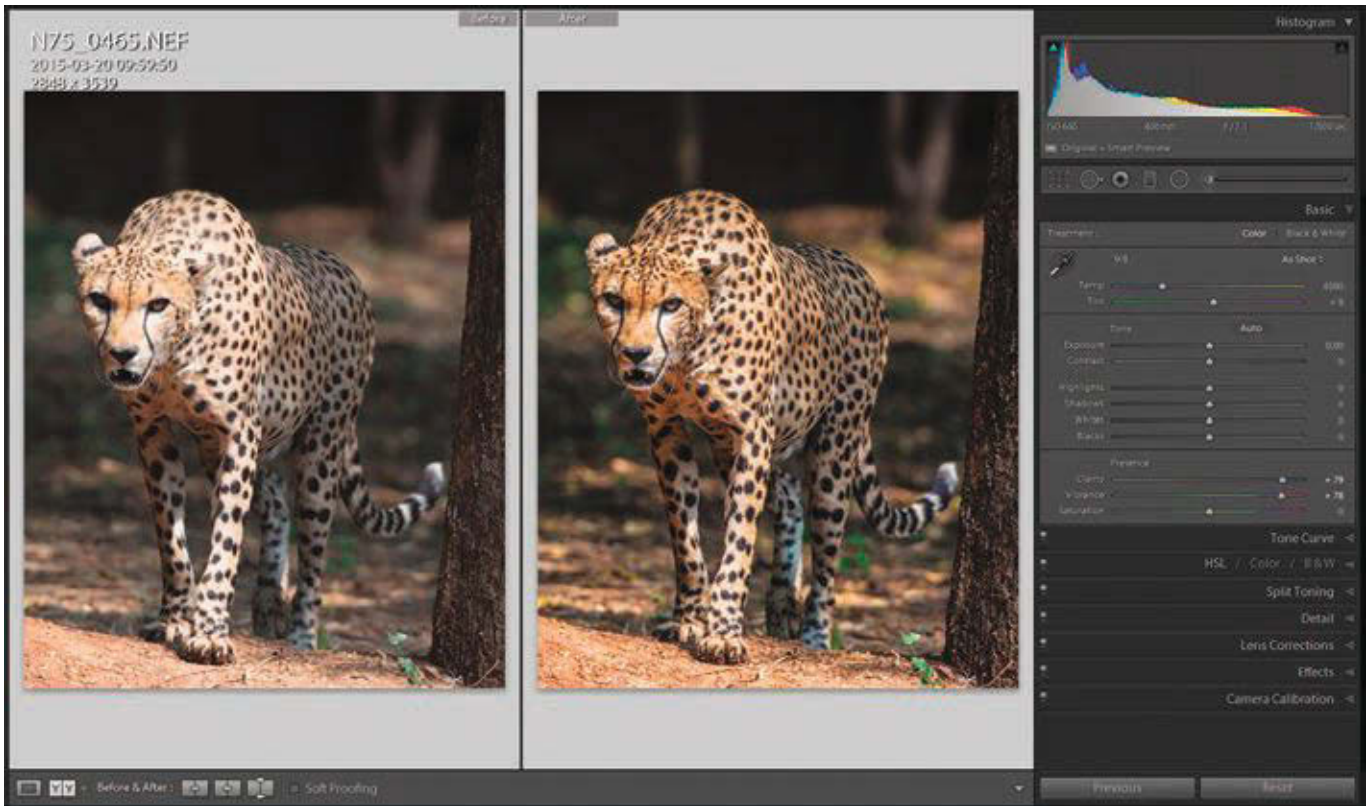
Clarity (Picture 6-1↓11): This is an interesting tool that alters contrast but in an intelligent way. It primarily learns about the edges, and enhances them. This is somewhat similar to sharpening but weaker. While the description is a little confusing, this is really a wonder tool that works like magic. Portraits are an exception. This is exactly the problem too since many over use just like they over sharpen images leading to halos (white edges at the high contrast boundaries). So, Adobe recommends that you apply the tool after keeping the display at 100% to detect any halos. Start with increasing the Clarity till halos appear and then back down a bit. Believe it or not this control makes the images simply pop!

Vibrance (Picture 6-1↓12): Call this 'smart saturation'. It operates on colours that are not saturated already leaving aside saturated colours. It also recognizes skin tones and avoids over saturation. This is another wonder tool!

Saturation (Picture 6-1↓13): Saturation means purity of the colour and one of the three parameters that define a colour. The other two are luminance and hue. These will be covered shortly. This is a fairly straight forward tool but is not as smart as Vibrance. Dragging the Saturation slider it to the extreme left, to minus 100 level makes the image back and white (monochrome). If this is a kitchen knife, then Vibrance is like a scalpel. My recommendation – stick to Vibrance.

Example 2: The effect of Clarity and Vibrance sliders is very evident as you can see (Picture 6-4). Here only Clarity and Vibrance sliders were used for development. No other slider was touched. See how Clarity increased the punch, and provided the depth whereas Vibrance subtly saturated the colours without making them look garish, the way Saturation slider would do.

Auto (Picture 6-1↓14): Clicking on this button will allow Lightroom to analyze the scene and apply all the parameters by itself. I generally don't recommend using it but you can try it out since the



Picture 6-4: The image on the left shows before and the one on the right after making adjustments using the Clarity and Vibrance sliders. The right panel shows the current development settings in effect: Clarity (+) 79 and Vibrance (+) 78.

changes are non-destructive. If you are lucky it may be just what the doctor had ordered but more often it will not be!

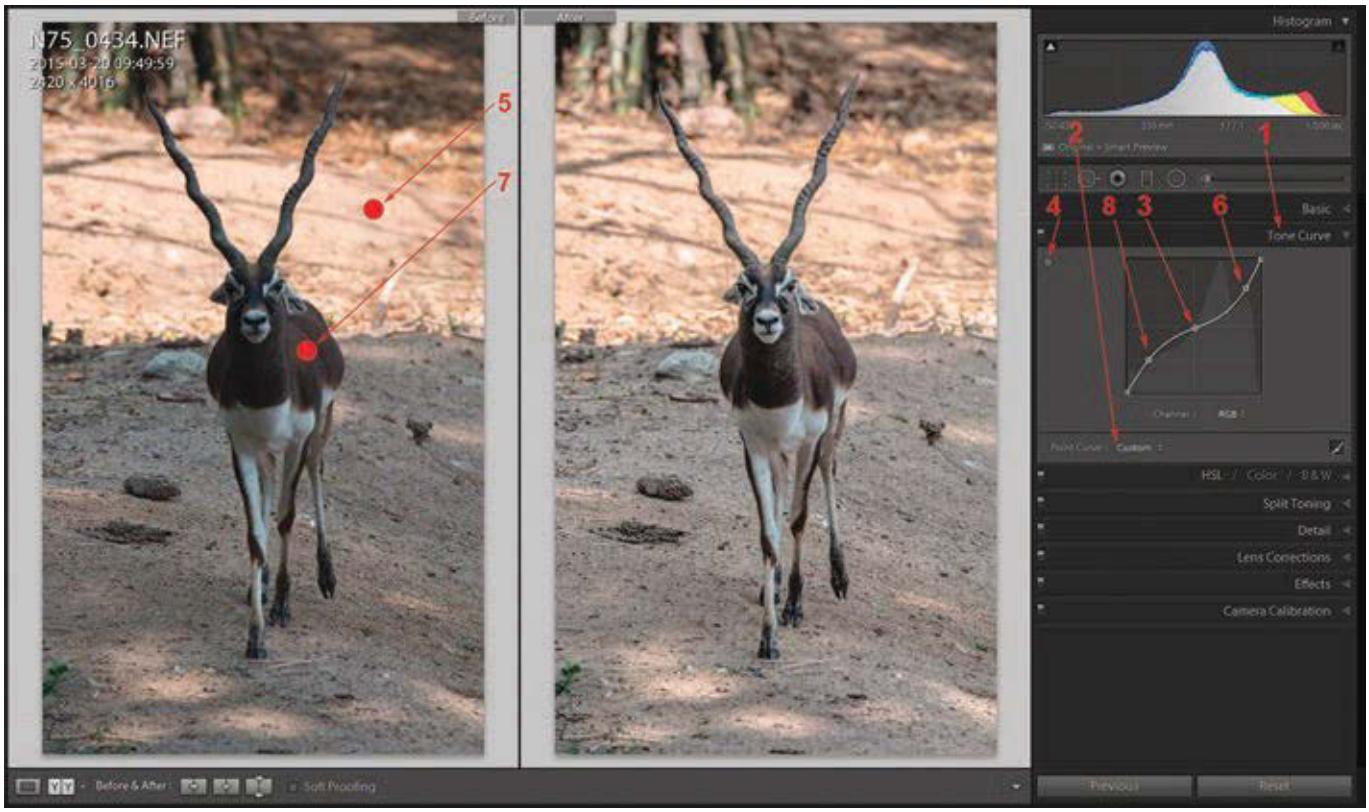
This completes the Basic tool. To sum up, different sliders of the Basic tool operate on different tonal regions. The Presence group is smarter and works by analysing the image for more sophisticated results. These alone will do the job 90% of the time. However, Lightroom also allows you to adjust specific tones and colours. These are called targeted adjustments.

Targeted Adjustments: There are two tools that support this. The first of these is the **Tone Curve** tool and the second is the **HSL / colour / B&W** tool. The former adjusts the tones and the latter colour. Both these are just below the Basic tool on the right panel. The beauty of these tools is that you need not even identify which tone or colour you want to change. All you need to do is to pick that tone or colour on the image using the **Targeted Adjustment tool** (or TAT for short) and then alter it.

First let us look at the Tone Curve tool. This in appearance and function is similar to the Photoshop Curves but a lot more flexible. While this tool can do a lot of things, the concentration for the present will be on the TAT.

Example 3: This example will show you how to use the TAT. The sample image is a high contrast one (Picture 6-5) with bright highlights and deep shadows. You need to tone down the highlights and open up the shadows to bring out the details in both areas. In other words you need to reduce the contrast. On the right panel select Tone Curve (Picture 6-5↓1). Now click on Point Curve and choose **Linear** (Picture 6-5↓2). You will see that the resulting curve is a straight line. Click on the center of the curve (Picture 6-5↓3). I will explain why this is needed shortly. Since you have touched the curve, the Point Curve will change from Linear to **Custom**. Pick up the TAT from its home position (Picture 6-5↓4) by clicking on it. Now take the TAT to the image area (you will see that the shape of the cursor has changed to TAT) and move the cursor over different tones. You will see that a small circle will move on the curve. The position of this small circle is the tonal value at that point on the image. Click on a point in the highlight area that has the tone you want to darken (in this case, Picture 6-5↓5). This will be immediately represented as a small fixed circle on the curve (Picture 6-5↓6). Now drag the cursor downwards. You will find that the selected tone will darken and the curve will be pulled downwards. Recall that you clicked on the center of the curve. If you had not done that the center point will not be anchored and the whole curve will pushed downwards which is not something you want. If this is not clear try one with the center point removed and you will see what I mean. Remember that all editing is non-destructive so you can go back without any worry. Bring the cursor back to the TAT home position (Picture 6-5↓4) and click. Alternately you can also click on **Done** at the bottom right of Preview area. This will complete the change.

You can follow similar steps to boost



Picture 6-5: The image on the left shows before and the one on right after doing the targeted tonal adjustments using TAT.

6-5↓1 Tone Curve tool
6-5↓2 Point Curve Selection
6-5↓3 Curve center point
6-5↓4 TAT home position
6-5↓5 A point in the highlight area
6-5↓6 Highlight point on tone curve
6-1↓7 A point in the shadow area
6-1↓8 Shadow point on tone curve

the shadows. First pick up the TAT as before, choose a point in the shadow area that represents the tone you want to boost (Picture 6-5↓7) and click on it. This will appear as a circle on the curve (Picture 6-5↓8). Now drag the cursor up to boost the shadows. The developed image is shown on the right side in the Preview area. You can see how the details which were hidden before have come out.

If you look at the curve now, it looks somewhat similar to a 'mirrored' S curve. The standard S curve which you might be familiar with boosts the contrast while this one does the opposite.

Next is to use the TAT for adjusting the colour. Before you do that, you need to understand how any colour is defined. This is done with three components called **hue, saturation** and **luminance** and are abbreviated as **HSL**. Here is a brief description of these.

Hue: This is basically what everyone commonly calls as colour. So, blue, orange, yellow are all hues. The Hues slider allows you to change a colour within a certain range.

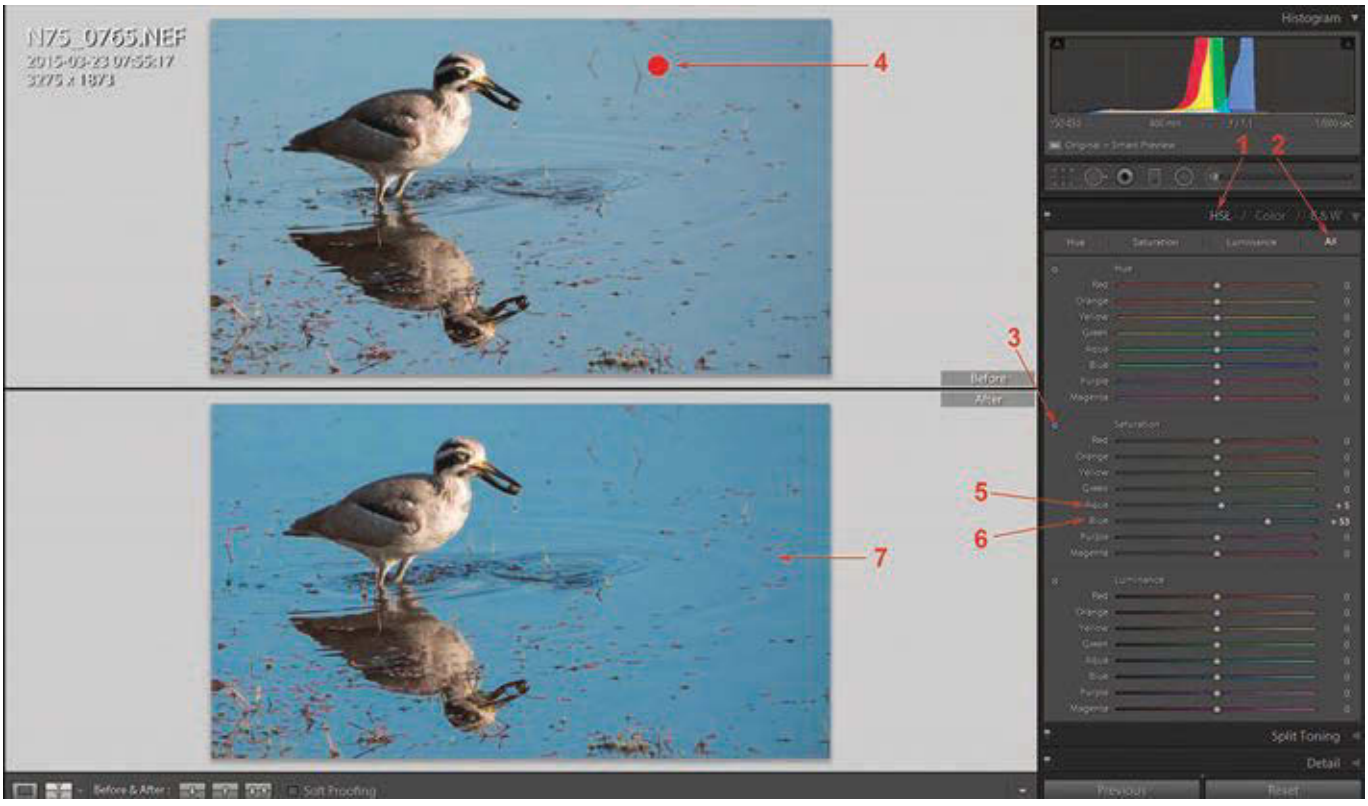
Saturation: This is a measure of purity of colour. It is also called vividness. What it means is that a fully saturated colour is pure and less saturated one has neutral grey mixed in it. As the grey content goes up, the saturation comes down. Thus, you can change using this slider, a greyish blue sky to blue one.

Luminance: This changes the brightness of the colour.

In Lightroom, all the Hue sliders are arranged as one group first, followed by Saturation and Luminance sliders (Picture 6-6). Lightroom gives you eight colours and hence there are eight Hue sliders followed by similar number of Saturation and Luminance sliders, giving you 24 sliders in total. Also, identification of a colour in an image is not always possible. This is because the colour you want to control through HLS sliders may not be just one colour but a mix of two or more. Under these conditions you will not be able decide the specific slider(s) that you need to use. However, don't panic as TAT will help you. The next example shows you how.

Example 4: Identify on the right panel **HSL / colour / B&W** tool and click on **HSL** (Picture 6-6↓1) and if needed expand the tool. In the expanded tool choose All (Picture 6-6↓2). This will show all the 24 sliders.

If you want to increase the saturation of a particular colour in the image, first pick up the TAT (Picture 6-6↓3) from its home position by clicking on it. Now move the cursor to the point which represents the colour of your interest (marked by a red spot, Picture 6-6↓4) and click again. This will select the needed slider or sliders. In this case, though the water looks bluish, it has an aqua component. So,



Picture 6-6: Using TAT to alter saturation of colour. The top image in the Preview area shows the image before and the bottom one after the saturation was increased by using TAT. .

6-6↓1 HSL / colour / B&W tool
6-6↓2 All option
6-6↓3 Home position of TAT for saturation
6-6↓4 Point chosen for representing the colour
6-6↓5 Aqua slider
6-6↓6 Blue slider
6-6↓7 Result after increasing the saturation

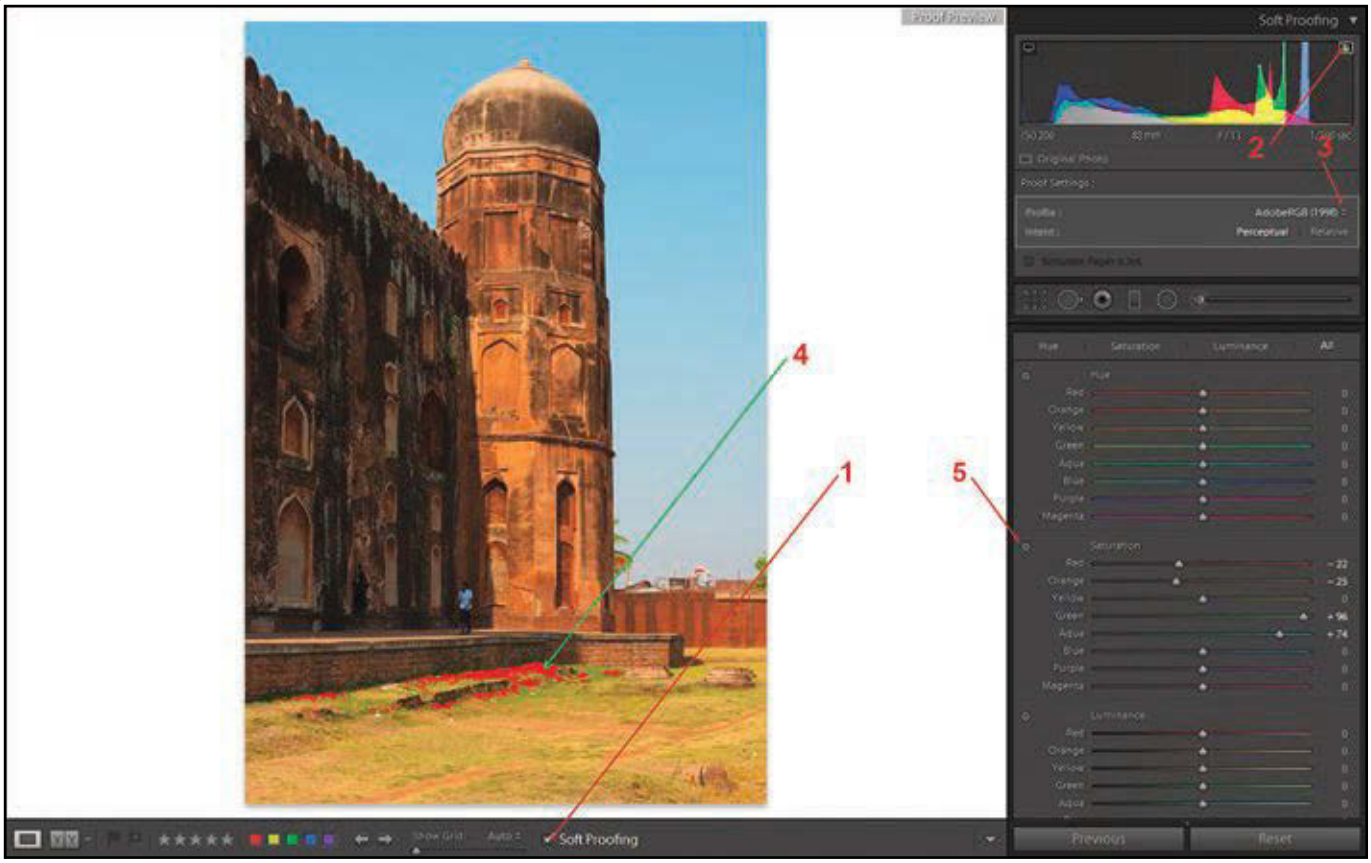
two sliders Aqua and Blue (Picture 6-6↓5 and 6-6↓6) were selected automatically. If you now drag the cursor upwards or downwards, the saturation (of both blue and aqua) will correspondingly increase or decrease (Picture 6-6↓7). After you are done, bring the cursor back to the TAT home position (Picture 6-6↓3) and click. You can repeat the operation for other colours. To alter hue and luminance, you need to pick up the corresponding TATs and follow the same procedure. Simple and brilliant isn't it?

Soft proofing: This is an advanced topic and is needed only if you are concerned about accurate colour reproduction while printing. It needs some knowledge of colour managed workflow. If you need more information on this topic please refer to the article titled "colour spaces are not empty spaces" published in Smart Photography, July 2014. For a colour managed workflow you must start with a monitor that has been profiled. Even then, you will find that many deep (highly saturated) colours that you have seen on the monitor are not appearing in the print. The discrepancy is due to the fact that some of the colours that you see may not be reproducible by the printing device. These are called 'out of gamut colours'. As you can expect, these will differ from printer to printer depending on the specific printer's capability. Commercial lab printers (like Fuji Frontier etc.) follow a smaller colour gamut that corresponds to a colour space called sRGB. A larger colour space called Adobe RGB (or aRGB) is also available and is supported by inkjet printers.

Lightroom allows reasonably accurate simulation of the printing device on your computer itself. This is called '**Soft Proofing**'. Its purpose is to show you if there are any out of gamut colours. To soft proof, you need to know the make and model of the printer along with the paper that you are going to use. You also need to have the corresponding printer profile loaded on your computer. In case you do not know all these details, you can use standardised profiles of sRGB (for lab printing) or aRGB (for inkjet printing) that Adobe provides by default.

For all its complexity, soft proofing is easy to use in Lightroom. First, enable soft proofing by clicking on the **Soft Proofing** check box (Picture 6-7↓1) in the Tool bar. (Press "T" if you don't see the Tool bar). Next, click on the **Destination Gamut Warning** icon (Picture 6-7↓2). You also need to tell Lightroom the type of printing device you are going to use by choosing the **Profile** (Picture 6-7↓3). If you don't know what the device is or if you don't have the appropriate profile, choose either sRGB or aRGB profile as explained.

Now, if you look at the Preview area and if there any out of gamut colours, you will see that they are highlighted



Picture 6-7: Soft Proofing Screen.

6-7↓1 Soft Proofing check box
6-7↓2 Destination (printer) Gamut Warning icon
6-7↓3 Printer Profile
6-7↓4 Highlighted area indicating out of gamut colors
6-7↓5 TAT for Saturation

Short cuts: Table 6-1 gives you some shortcuts to help you use the Develop module efficiently.

Table 6-1 – Shortcuts

Shortcut	What it does
Full stop key	Next slider
Comma	Previous slider
Double click on the slider name	Resets the slider to default value
Alt + dragging Tone group sliders	Displays clipped areas. Works with Highlights, Whites, Exposure, Shadows and Blacks sliders.

in red colour (Picture 6-7↓4). These are not going to print properly. So, pick up the TAT Saturation tool (Picture 6-7↓5), choose any point on the highlighted area (say at a point shown by arrow Picture 6-7↓4) and drag the mouse down to reduce saturation. You will notice that the highlighted areas will gradually reduce and finally get eliminated. At this stage you can be sure that whatever is appearing in the Preview area of your monitor will get printed. That is all to this! |SP

CONCLUSION

This article, the Part 6 of the tutorial, explained how to perform tonal and colour adjustments which are essential for developing any image. You were also introduced to Targeted Adjustments, which will allow you to control a specific tone or colour. Lastly the topic of soft proofing was described in detail.

Next month: *Noise reduction. Sharpening and more!*

All text diagrams and images © Ashok Kandimalla

Reviews

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Change in Rating System

Smart Photography's new rating system exercises stricter evaluation in view of improvements in the overall performance of photographic equipment. Marks will be awarded for the following parameters...

Final Rankings

Recommended	75-80%
Best Buy	81% and above

D-SLR CAMERAS

Design & Build Quality	(out of 20)
Key Features	(out of 20)
Ergonomics	(out of 20)
Performance	
Autofocus	(out of 5)
Metering	(out of 5)
Noise control	(out of 5)
Distortion/Sharpness	(out of 5)
LCD/Viewfinder	(out of 5)
Auto White Balance	(out of 5)
Value for Money	(out of 10)
Grand Total	(out of 100)

LENSES

Design & Build Quality	(out of 20)
Key Features	(out of 20)
Ergonomics	(out of 20)
Performance	
Autofocus	(out of 5)
Sharpness	(out of 5)
Distortion control	(out of 5)
Aberrations	(out of 5)
Darkening of corners	(out of 5)
Extra Features	(out of 5)
Value for Money	(out of 10)
Grand Total	(out of 100)

COMPACT CAMERAS

Design & Build Quality	(out of 20)
Key Features	(out of 20)
Ergonomics	(out of 20)
Performance	
Autofocus	(out of 5)
Metering	(out of 5)
Noise control	(out of 5)
Distortion/Sharpness	(out of 5)
LCD/Viewfinder	(out of 5)
Auto White Balance	(out of 5)
Value for Money	(out of 10)
Grand Total	(out of 100)



Inside the Box

- ✓ Sony WX500 camera
- ✓ Rechargeable Battery Pack NP-BX1
- ✓ AC AdaptorAC-UB10C/UB10D
- ✓ Micro USB cable
- ✓ Wrist Strap
- ✓ Instruction Manual
- ✓ AC Power Code

Sony Cyber-shot WB500 | **₹ 19,990** | Sujith Gopinath

Pocket Boomer

Compact cameras have become smarter and more professional with larger-than-usual sensors, better processors and superior optics. This development, combined with better cameras in smartphones, have largely been able to check the success of small-sensor compacts. Yet, the prohibitively high prices of most of these 'professional' compacts make it out of bounds for most compact camera users. Hence it makes perfect sense for a manufacturer to keep a limited number of models in the small sensor compacts along with the high-end compacts. The Sony WB500 is one such compact super-zoom camera with a small compact sensor.

Design and Build Quality

The Sony WB500 is built solid with a combination of metal and engineering plastic on the exterior. The front panel is finished with a metal sheet, and there is no real hand grip on the camera. The top panel houses the power button, shutter release button-zoom lever unit, mode dial, built-in flash, and the flash (pop-up) lever. The camera has a plastic tripod receptacle, but we cannot complain since the camera itself is quite light at approximately 236g. The HDMI port is at the bottom. The lens has a three-segment construction. The battery chamber door is very flimsy, as is the case with most compact cameras.

Key Features

The 18.2 megapixel Sony WB500 uses a 1/2.3-inch Type (6.16 x 4.62mm) Exmor R CMOS sensor. It also features the latest BIONZ X image processor. The camera features a ZEISS Vario-Sonnar T* 25-750mm f/3.5 – 6.4 lens constructed with 11 elements in 10 groups including five aspherical elements. Total aperture range is f/3.5 to 8 at the wide-angle and f/6.4 to 8.0 at the telephoto end. This means that at the telephoto end, you get less than a stop of flexibility in aperture. In fact, you will get a full stop difference only till 7.6x optical zoom (about 190mm). The lens features Optical SteadyShot image stabilisation combined with electronic compensation. The image stabiliser also compensates for rolling shutter effect seen in videos. The lens focusses from 5cm to infinity at the wide-angle end and 250cm to infinity at the telephoto end. Focus modes available are Single-shot AF (AF-S) and Continuous AF (AF-C). Focus area options include Wide, Centre, Flexible Spot (Small, Medium and Large), and Expanded Flexible Spot. It also has provision for Lock-on AF.

The camera has the usual three metering modes — Multi pattern, Centre-weighted, and Spot. Exposure can be compensated up to +/- 3.0 EV in 1/3 EV steps. Sensitivity ranges from ISO 80 to 3200 for still images and ISO 80 to 1600 for videos. White Balance options are Auto, Daylight, Shade, Cloudy, Incandescent,



Mahesh Reddy

Aperture: f/7.1
Shutter Speed: 1/400sec
ISO: 100

Fluorescent (Cool White, Day White, Daylight), Flash, Custom, One Push, and One Push Set. Shutter speed range from 30 to 1/2000 second. Self-timer can be set to 2 or 10seconds for up to three consecutive shots.

Still images are captured in JPEG format with maximum dimensions of 4,896 x 3,264 pixels, while videos are recorded in AVCHD, MP4 or XAVC S format at the best quality of 1,920 x 1,080/50p. The camera can shoot continuous frames at the rate of 10 frames per second for up to 10 shots at full resolution, but only at certain settings. Shooting modes include Superior Auto, Intelligent Auto, Program, Shutter Speed Priority, Aperture Priority, Manual, Movie, Panorama, Scene Selection, and MR (Memory Recall). Movie modes include Program Auto, Aperture Priority, Shutter Speed Priority, and Manual Exposure. Scene Selection mode provides sub-modes such as High Sensitivity, Night Scene, Night Portrait, Portrait, Landscape, Beach, Snow, Fireworks, Advanced Sports Shooting, Gourmet, Pet, Soft Skin, Handheld Twilight, Anti Motion Blur, Backlight Correction HDR, Sunset, Picture Effect, HDR Painting, Rich-tone Monochrome, Miniature, Toy Camera, Pop Colour, Partial Colour, Soft High-key, Water Colour, Posterisation, Retro Photo, Soft Focus, High Contrast Monochrome, and Illustration. The camera offers Auto Macro, Face Detection (detects up to eight faces), Face Registration, Smile Shutter, Zebra, and Histogram among other useful features. The WB500 also provides an optical zoom of 30x during movie recording. It has a manual pop-up type built-in flash with a range of approximately 0.3 to 5.4m at the wide-angle end and 2.5 to 3.0m at the telephoto end when ISO sensitivity is set to Auto. Flash modes include Auto, Flash On, Slow Sync., Flash Off, and Rear Sync.

The camera uses a 3.0-inch, 921,600-dot Xtra Fine TFT for display, and it can be tilted up by approximately 180 degrees. The WB500 uses a Memory Stick (Duo/PRO Duo/PRO HG Duo) or SD/SDHC/SDXC card for

The HDMI port on the bottom plate necessitates the camera to be resting on the LCD or lens while connected to a computer or TV-which is not a good idea

external storage. The camera features multi-use terminal, Mini HDMI, Wi-Fi and NFC. The device is powered by a 1240mAh Li-ion battery pack (supplied). It can be charged through USB cable. The camera has dimensions of 101.6 x 58.1 x 35.5 mm (W x H x D) and weighs 236g with battery and Memory Stick.

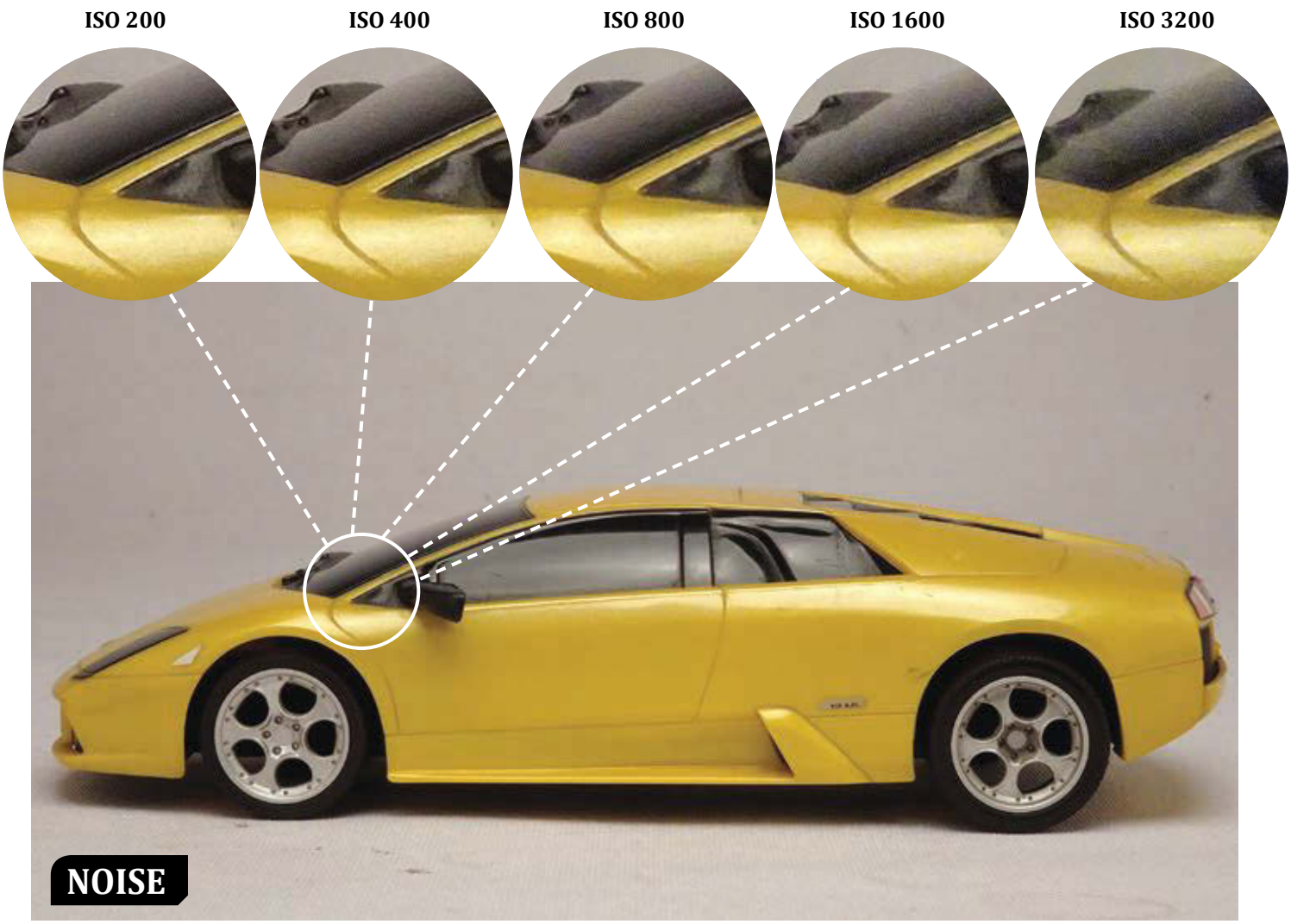
Ergonomics

As mentioned in the Build Quality section, the WB500 does not have a well-defined hand grip. The metal surface is slippery. Also, in cold weather, it can get very uncomfortable to hold. Although we cannot complain about the buttons and dials being too tiny for a camera of this size, we feel that it can be a problem for people with larger hands. The HDMI port on the bottom plate necessitates the camera to be resting on the LCD or lens while connected to another device. This can cause scratches on the screen or damage the protective shutter in front of the lens. We found it difficult to use the flash pop-up lever since it is very tiny. The screen appeared rather dull by today's standards.

Performance

The Sony WB500 performed reasonably well in our tests. Autofocus was fast and precise, and the system could lock on to the subject even under low light. Metering modes performed well and we did not have any problem with exposures. The camera controlled darkening of corners very well. In fact, we did not observe any darkening at the wide-angle end even with the lens wide open. We observed mild pin cushion distortion at the telephoto end from about 600mm equivalent onwards.

The camera produced reasonably sharp images. However, it has to be noted that from 190mm equivalent onwards, you will not get even a full f-stop in aperture. At 100mm, you get critically sharp images only at f/5, and at 750mm, images are unsharp at all apertures (which is limited to f/6.4-8). At 25mm, f/3.5 and f/4 reproduced sharp images, and of these, f/4 was found to be the sharpest. The lens produced heavy flare and ghosting at the wide-angle end with the lens wide open while photographing strong against-the-light subjects. A tinge







The small buttons can be a problem for people with large fingers.

KEY SPECIFICATIONS

Sensor Type: 1/2.3-inch Type (6.16 x 4.62mm) Type Exmor R CMOS
Effective pixels: Approx. 18.2 Mega Pixels
Imaging processor: BIONZ X
Lens: ZEISS Vario-Sonnar T* 25-750mm f/3.5 - 6.4
Lens construction: 11 elements in 10 groups (5 aspheric element)
Focus range: 5cm to Infinity (W), 250cm to Infinity (T)
LCD: 3.0-inch, 921,600-dot Xtra Fine TFT
Adjustable angle: Yes. Up by approx. 180 degrees
Image stabiliser: Optical SteadyShot with electronic compensation, Anti-rolling type
Focus modes: Single-shot AF (AF-S), Continuous AF (AF-C)
Metering modes: Multi pattern, Centre-weighted, Spot
Exposure compensation: +/- 3.0 EV, 1/3 EV step
ISO sensitivity: Still: ISO 80 to 3200 Movie: ISO 80 to 1600
Shutter speed: 30 to 1/2000 sec
Best video quality: AVCHD - 1,920 X 1,080/50p
Burst Speed (Maximum): Approx. 10 fps (for up to 10 shots)
NFC: Yes
Wi-Fi: Yes
Power source: 1240mAh Li-ion battery pack (supplied)
Dimensions (W x H x D): Approx. 101.6 x 58.1 x 35.5 mm
Weight: Approx. 236g (with battery and Memory Stick)

of purple fringing was seen, but you are not likely to notice it in everyday images and at low magnifications.

Auto White Balance performed well with the camera producing cast-free images at most light sources. Native print size is 12.24 x 16.32 inches at 300 ppi. At 25 percent screen size, images were noise-free up to ISO 200. We observed slight noise from ISO 400 onwards. Images were usable up to ISO 800. Enlarged to 50 percent, we spotted noise at all ISOs. If you can bear with slight noise, you may use the images up to ISO 400. At 100 percent magnification, you could use ISO 80 and 100 if it is absolutely necessary.

Video recording was smooth and seamless.

Value for Money

The Sony WB500 retails at Rs.19,990. At this price, the camera is slightly expensive considering the limited aperture and soft images at the telephoto end. |SP

FINAL SCORE



75%

Design and Build Quality	**12/15**
Key Features	**12/15**
Ergonomics	**11/15**

Performance

Autofocus	4.5/5
Metering	4/5
Noise Control	3/5
Sharpness	3/5
Darkening of corners	4.5/5
Flare and CA	3/5
Distortion	4/5
LCD/EVF	4/5
Auto WB	4/5
Sub-Total	**34/45**
Value for Money	**6/10**

PLUS

- Compact and lightweight
- 30x optical zoom

MINUS

- Very narrow aperture range
- Noise control could have been better
- Sharpness suffers badly

VERDICT

The Sony WB500 is a compact super zoom camera that can fit in a shirt pocket. The camera is easy to use and fits the budget of the common man. However, if you are looking at uncompromising image quality with manual control, this camera has some serious limitations.



Inside the Box

✓ Canon PowerShot G5X
✓ Neck strap
✓ Battery charger
✓ Battery pack NB-013L

Canon Power-Shot G5x ₹ 49,995 Sujith Gopinath

Sensible Release

The role of compact cameras has been almost completely taken over by smartphones, mainly due to convenience. To differentiate between a camera and a smartphone, camera manufacturers had to innovate, and the result is the segment now known as premium compacts. These are essentially compact cameras with larger-than-usual sensors (mostly 1-inch Type), wider maximum apertures and sturdy construction. The Canon PowerShot G5X joins this segment currently dominated by Sony RX-series cameras.

Design and Build Quality

The Canon PowerShot G5X is built sturdy with a generous use of metals in combination with engineering plastics. The body has a premium look and feel in every aspect, including protruding rubber grips and matte finished exteriors. The doors and hinges are of a good standards. The lens has a two-segment construction and it does not protrude much during zooming. The swivel and rotate LCD brilliantly hides the connecting cables unlike tilt-only screens seen in some other cameras. The camera has a metal tripod receptacle. The tiny flash resides closer to the lens, just ahead of the accessory shoe so that it does not cause vignetting.

Key Features

The Canon PowerShot G5X is a 20.2 megapixel compact camera with a 1.0-inch Type (9.6 x 12.8mm) sensor. The camera features a DIGIC 6 processor. It houses a 24-100mm equivalent lens with an optical (lens-shift type) image stabiliser system. In normal mode, the lens focusses from 5cm to infinity at the wide-angle end and from 40cm to infinity at the telephoto end, whereas in Macro mode, it focusses from 5 to 50cm at the wide-angle end. Focus modes include Continuous AF, Servo AF, and Manual Focus. AF frame can be set to 1-point or Face+Tracking (up to 31 AF points). The camera uses the usual three metering modes—Evaluative, Centre-weighted average, and Spot. ISO sensitivity ranges from ISO 125 – 12800. You can also choose Auto option. Shutter speeds range from 30 to 1/2000second along with Bulb option. The lens has an aperture range of f/1.8 to 11 at the wide-angle end and f/2.8 to 11 at the telephoto end.

The built-in flash has a range of 50cm to 7.0m at the wide-angle end and 50cm to 4.0m at the telephoto end, presumably in Auto ISO mode. Flash modes available are Auto, On, Slow Synchro, and Off. The camera also has a standard accessory shoe (hot-shoe). Shooting modes include C (Custom),



Mahesh Reddy

Aperture: f/6.3
Shutter Speed: 1/125sec
ISO: 400

M (Manual), Av (Aperture priority), Tv (Shutter speed), P (Program), Hybrid Auto, Auto, Creative Shot, SCN, and Movie. Scene modes available are Self Portrait, Portrait, Star, Handheld NightScene, High Dynamic Range, Nostalgic, Fish-eye Effect, Miniature Effect, Toy Camera Effect, Background Defocus, Soft Focus, Monochrome, Super Vivid, Poster Effect, and Fireworks. Movie mode presents additional options of Standard movie, Short Clip, Manual movie, and iFrame movie. Star modes available are Star Portrait, Star Nightscape, Star Trails, and Star Time-Lapse Movie. White Balance options are Auto, Day Light, Shade, Cloudy, Tungsten, Fluorescent, Fluorescent H, Flash, Custom 1, and Custom 2.

The camera can shoot continuously at approximately 5.9 frames per second in Auto and P Mode (only at low resolutions). Still images can be recorded in JPEG or Raw format with maximum dimensions of 5472 x 3648 pixels, while videos are recorded in MP4 format at the best quality of 1920 x 1080 at 30fps. The camera allows you to record clips for a maximum length of approximately 40minutes.

The G5X uses a 0.39 inch, approx. 2,360,000-dot electronic viewfinder. The LCD screen is a 3.0-inch, vari-angle capacitive touch panel with approximately 1,040,000-dot resolution and a wide viewing angle. The screen can be swivelled up to 180 degrees and rotated up to 270 degrees. The camera uses an SD/SDHC/SDXC memory card for external storage. Other features of the camera include Wi-Fi, NFC, and USB charging.
The camera is powered by a rechargeable NB-13L battery pack (supplied). The G5X has dimensions of 112.4 x 76.4 x 44.2 mm (W x H x D) and weighs 377g including battery and memory card.

The swivel and rotate LCD brilliantly hides the connecting cables unlike tilt-only screens seen in some other cameras

Ergonomics

The Canon G5X is quite comfortable to use with protruding rubber grips both at the front and the back. The top panel features mode dial and exposure compensation dial. There is a control ring around the lens, which can be assigned various functions. There is a vertical command dial near the shutter release button, on the front panel in addition to the one near the four-way button. The interface is intuitive, and menu self-explanatory. The buttons are small, yet easy to use.

Performance

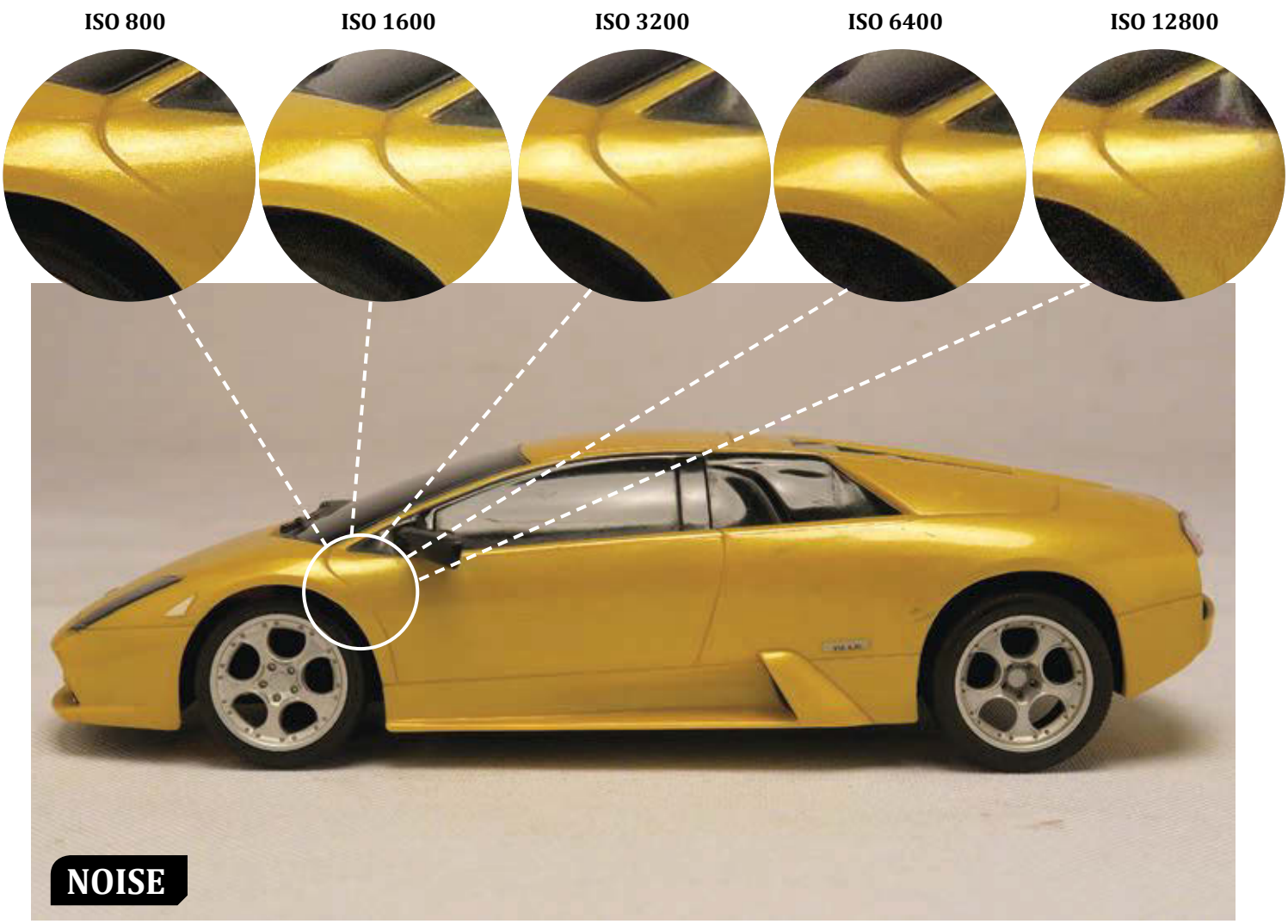
The Canon G5X performed well in our tests. Autofocus was fast and spot-on, and the system did not have any problem locking on to the subject even in low light. All metering modes performed well as expected.

The LCD monitor is of good quality, and the images were displayed crisp and clear. The electronic viewfinder is too small and tedious to use especially if you use it for a long time. However, this is still helpful to reduce camera shake at low shutter speeds.

A tinge of darkening was observed at the corners at the wide-angle end with the lens wide open, though it was barely noticeable. Images were reasonably sharp. At the wide-angle end, sharpest images were obtained at f/2.8, and f/2 to 5.6 were reasonably sharp. At the middle of the zoom (around 50mm equivalent), the sweet spot was found to be f/4, while f/2.8 to 8 were sharp enough. This sweet spot was maintained till the telephoto end, where f/4 to 8 were reasonably sharp. The images were free of any distortion in the practical sense, which is quite good.

Native print size was 12.16 x 18.24 inches at 300 ppi. At 25 percent, the images were noise-free up to ISO 3200. The images were usable up to ISO 6400. Enlarged to 50 percent, the images remained noise-free up to ISO 800, and were usable up to ISO 3200. Observed at 100 percent, we observed slight noise throughout the ISO range, but the images could be used till ISO 200.

The lens produced prominent flare along with heavy purple fringing at the wide-angle end with the lens





The main command dial is easily accessible with the index finger

KEY SPECIFICATIONS

Effective Pixels: Approx. 20.2 megapixels
Sensor Size: 1.0-inch Type (9.6 x 12.8mm)
Lens: 24-100mm equivalent
Focus Range: Normal: 5cm to infinity (W), 40cm to infinity (T); Macro: 5 - 50cm (W) (2.0 in. - 1.6 ft. (W))
Image Stabiliser System: Lens-shift type
EVF: 0.39 inch Approx. 2,360,000-dot
LCD Screen: 3.0-inch, approx. 1,040,000-dot TFT colour LCD with wide viewing angle
Screen features: Touch-screen panel (capacitive type), Vari-Angle
Focus control: Continuous AF, Servo AF, Manual Focus
ISO sensitivity: Auto, ISO 125 – 12800
Shutter Speed: 30 to 1/2000sec., Bulb
Aperture range: f/1.8 - 11 (W), f/2.8 - 11 (T)
Flash range: 50cm – 7.0m (W), 50cm - 4.0m (T)
Hotshoe: Available
Continuous shooting: Approx. 5.9 frames per second (AUTO, P Mode)
Max. recording pixels: Still Images: 5472 x 3648; Movies: 1920 x 1080, 30fps
Max. movie recording time: Approx. 40min
Still Image Format: JPEG, Raw
Other Features: Wi-Fi, NFC, Control Ring, Hot Shoe, USB Charging
Memory card type : SD / SDHC / SDXC
Power supply: Battery pack NB-13L
Dimensions: 112.4 x 76.4 x 44.2 mm (W x H x D)
Weight: 377g (including the battery and memory card)

FINAL SCORE



82%

Design and Build Quality 14/15

Key Features 14/15

Ergonomics 13/15

Performance

Autofocus	4/5
Metering	4/5
Noise Control	4/5
Sharpness	4/5
Darkening of corners	4/5
Flare and CA	3/5
Distortion	3.5/5
LCD/EVF	3.5/5
Auto WB	3/5

Sub-Total 33/45

Value for Money 8/10

wide open in strong against the light situations. The images had an overall red cast under all lighting conditions in Auto White Balance, but these were easy to remove in post-processing.

Value for Money

The Canon PowerShot G5X retails at an MRP of Rs.49,995. At this price, the camera seems good value for money since the latest 1-inch sensor compacts with similar specifications carry much higher price tags. |SP

PLUS
- Excellent build quality
- Fast aperture
- Good noise control
- Sharp results

MINUS
- Red cast in Auto White Balance
- Flare and purple fringing

VERDICT

The Canon G5X is a large sensor compact providing a maximum aperture range of f/1.8 to 2.8. The camera delivers superior performance, and is easily one amongst the most desirable compacts in the market. At this price, the camera is surely a Best Buy.

Inside the Box

- ✓ Tokina AT-X 24-70mm f/2.8 PRO FX lens
- ✓ Lens Hood BH-822
- ✓ Front and back caps



Tokina AT-X 24-70mm f/2.8 PRO FX ₹90,000

Sujith Gopinath

A Fair Buy

Tokina has been known to produce lenses with superior optics and sturdy build quality for a very long time. These lenses have their signature style with focus clutch mechanism for focussing and excellent overall grip. The Tokina AT-X 24-70mm f/2.8 PRO FX lens joins the premium models in the most sought after category of lenses.

Design and Build Quality

The Tokina 24-70mm f/2.8 carries the sturdy build quality typical of Tokina lenses. The outer barrel of the lens is made of tough engineering plastic, while the inner barrel is metal. Both the zoom and focussing rings have textured rubber grips. There is a focus distance window, and focal lengths are marked legibly in white and fluorescent yellow letterings. The lens has a metal mount. A rubber ring near the mount helps to seal it from water and dust particles. The 24-70mm accepts an 82mm threaded filter. The lens has a maximum outer diameter of 89.6mm and length of 107.5mm.

Key Features

The Tokina AT-X 24-70mm f/2.8 PRO FX lens is primarily designed for Full-Frame cameras, but can also be used with APS-C Type cameras. On Nikon DX bodies, this lens will provide a focal length of 36 – 105mm, while on Canon APS-C bodies, it provides 38 – 112mm focal length. The lens is constructed with 15 elements in 11 groups including three SD (Super-low Dispersion) and three precision molded all-glass aspherical elements. Of these, one is a large sized aspherical element made of SD glass element (included under both SD and aspherical listings). The aspherical elements are believed to provide excellent contrast and sharpness while also correcting spherical aberration. The SD elements are incorporated to control chromatic aberration. Together with multi-layer coatings, the lens is designed to produce even illumination across the imaging area.

The Tokina 24-70mm lens has a maximum aperture of f/2.8 and a minimum aperture of f/22. The lens has a minimum focus distance of 0.38m and maximum magnification ratio of 1:4.73. It features internal focussing and hence the dimensions remain the same while focussing. Zoom is rotary type and the front barrel extends during zooming. The lens features a 9-bladed circular aperture producing pleasing bokehs.

Tokina claims that the lens can produce resolutions that match even the 50 megapixel cameras currently in market. The lens incorporates a fast SDM (Silent Drive-Module) motor that provides near-silent autofocus. Similar to all Tokina lenses, this lens also features One-touch Focus Clutch mechanism, which allows you to switch between AF and MF by pushing the focus ring forward or pulling it backward. It does not allow manual override in autofocus mode.

Ergonomics

The Tokina 24-70mm is almost as heavy as other similar f/2.8 lenses. But the Tokina earns full marks for the comfort of use. The rubber grips makes zooming and manual focussing very comfortable, along with the focus clutch system that makes switching between focus modes a snap. Though the lens does not feature manual

Aperture: f/8
Shutter Speed: 1/125sec
ISO: 400;



Mahesh Reddy



Aperture: f/2.8
Shutter Speed: 1/2000sec
ISO: 400;

Mahesh Reddy

focus override, it is really not required since you can easily switch to manual mode using the same focus ring that you use for manual focussing.

Performance

The Tokina 24-70mm f/2.8 performed reasonably well in our tests. Autofocus was very fast and precise. The AF operation was silent too, thanks to internal focussing. At 24mm, the images were sharp from f/5.6 to 16, and the sweet spot was f/5.6. At 50mm, sharp images were obtained between f/8 to 16 and the sweet spot shifted to f/11. At 70mm, the acceptable sharpness range was f/11 to 16, and the sweet spot remained at f/11.

We observed prominent darkening of corners at f.2.8 at the wide-angle end, reducing progressively with narrowing apertures and finally vanishing around f/8. The lens produced flare along with heavy purple fringing at the wide-angle end with the lens wide open while photographing strong against-the-light subjects. The 24-70mm showed barrel distortion up to 40mm focal length and pincushion at the telephoto end.

KEY SPECIFICATIONS

Focal length:	24-70mm
Maximum Aperture:	f/2.8
Minimum Aperture:	f/22
Construction:	15 elements in 11 groups
SD Glass:	3 Elements
Coatings:	Multi-layer coatings
Angle of View:	84.20-34.49°
Minimum Focus Distance:	0.38 m
Max. Magnification ratio:	1:4.73
Focus method:	Internal focusing
Zoom type:	Rotary zoom
Aperture Blades:	9
Filter Size:	82mm
Maximum Outer Diameter:	89.6mm
Length:	107.5mm
Sensor Size:	Full Frame
Weight:	1010g
Mounts:	Canon Full Frame, Nikon Full Frame

Value for Money

The Tokina 24-70mm f/2.8 retails at an MRP of Rs.90,000. This is very good value for money for a standard f/2.8 zoom. |SP

FINAL SCORE



79%

Design and Build Quality	**18/20**
Key Features	**16/20**
Ergonomics	**17/20**
Performance	
Autofocus	4.5/5
Sharpness	4.5/5
Distortion control	3/5
Aberrations	3/5
Darkening of corners	3/5
Extra features	3/5
Sub-Total	**21/30**
Value for Money	**7/10**

PLUS

- Excellent build quality
- Focus clutch mechanism
- Good sharpness
- Attractive price

MINUS

- Heavy distortion
- Prominent light fall-off
- No image stabilisation

VERDICT

The Tokina 24-70mm f/2.8 is surely a good buy when it comes to the price. But having experienced previous Tokina models, it is but natural that we expected a little more of perfection in controlling aberrations and optical flaws. Nevertheless, at this price range, the lens is a good buy for advanced and semi-professionals on a budget.

Photopro 300 DT

The New D-Tech Studio Flash Systen

photopro®
THE GAME OF LIGHT

A revolutionary Product



To create an accurate impact on photos lighting turns out to be a crucial dynamic. Therefore having well-suited combination of lighting become essential. In such scenario studio flash lights plays key role, they propose boundless creative possibilities for the ardent photograph or still-life photographer.

Photopro, India's one of the most reliable photography equipment manufacturer,provides the New Photopro 300 DT,a revolutionary product.

The New D-Tech Studio Flash System variable control with 40 steps unique in it's range with color corrected flash tube and it's light weight body not only makes it ideal for small shoots in studio but also very easy to carry for perfection in works.



ACCESSORIES

Light stand, Softbox 60x60 Pro, with carry bag, Safety cap, Main cable, Syncro cable, warranty card, box

Technical Specification

Flash output (w/s) Max.- 125, Flash output (w/s) Min.- 20w, Dimmer-Yes, Half n Full-No, *F.Stop 1meter with 21cm. 55 degree metal ref. with silver reflective- 32 1/3, Recycling Time- 2 Sec., Modelling Lamp-100w, Flash Duration- 1/3000 Sec., Twin-Tech-No, Body-Plastic, Weight-1 Kg.,



Inside the Box

- ✓ Lens
- ✓ Lens pouch
- ✓ Front & Rear lens caps
- ✓ Instruction leaflet

Sigma 20mm f/1.4 DG HSM ART | **₹ 73,000** | Rohinton Mehta

Sigma Does It Again!

Sigma's interchangeable lenses are divided into three product categories – Contemporary, Art and Sports. Art lenses are designed for the ultimate in optical performance and can stand up to (and even go beyond) the best lenses from leading camera manufacturers. According to Sigma, the Sigma 20mm f/1.4 DG HSM ART is the world's first ultra-wide-angle lens for full-frame cameras offering a fast f/1.4 aperture. The lens is made in Japan and is available in Sigma, Canon and Nikon mounts. The lens that we received for review had a Canon mount.

Design & Build Quality

Elegantly designed and beautifully finished in black, the Sigma 20mm f/1.4 is a 'pro' lens for 35mm full-frame format. When used on an APS-C camera body, it will provide an equivalent focal length of 32mm. The internal parts employ the use of Thermally Stable Composite (TSC) and metal which ensure precise operation.

The lens mount is made of brass. The lens barrel is engraved with the year of release and the letter 'A' next to the distance scale identifies the lens as an 'Art' lens. A raised white dot helps to align the lens to the camera body. The lens hood is an integral part of the lens. The lens weighs 950g including both the end caps.

Key Features

The Sigma 20mm f/1.4 DG HSM Art is the world's first 20mm f/1.4 lens. This necessitates the use of a very large distortion-free front element and Sigma was able to achieve this breakthrough due to their advanced large-diameter aspherical lens manufacturing technologies. Generally, ultra-wide-angle lenses with large maximum aperture suffer from chromatic aberrations. To combat this problem, the Sigma 20mm f/1.4 is constructed with 15 elements in 11 groups that include 2 FLD (F-Low Dispersion), 5 SLD (Special Low Dispersion) and 2 aspherical lens elements which significantly reduce these aberrations. Super multi-coating on key elements reduce flare and ghosting. Not only that, Sigma's advanced optical design helps to reduce corner darkening and minimize various other types of distortion.

A Hyper Sonic Motor (HSM) aids in quick and efficient autofocussing. Manual overriding of AF is possible by merely turning the focus ring. There is no need to use the AF/MF focus switch, thus allowing faster fine-tuning when necessary. A distance scale in feet and meters and a depth of field scale for f/8 and f/16 is available, though this would be difficult to see in low light. Due to the bulging front element, filters cannot be used. Since the lens has internal focussing, its dimensions remain the same during focussing.

Ergonomics

We tested the lens on a Canon EOS 6D body. Though reasonably heavy (935g without end caps), the combo balanced well. The lens was very easy to use.

Performance

Overall, the Sigma 20mm f/1.4 DG HSM Art performed very well. Used wide open at f/1.4, centre sharpness was good while the corners and the sides were definitely much softer. In all fairness, this would happen with almost all ultra- wide-angle fast lenses. Stopping down the lens improved the sharpness at the centre as well as the sides. F/4 appeared to be the sharpest at the centre, closely followed by f/5.6. F/5.6 appeared to be the sharpest at the corners. By f/16, images were noticeably softer (centre as well as corners) due to diffraction of light. F/11 too showed some signs of softening.

Distortion control was superb – almost imperceptible barrel distortion was noticed and that too at very close distances. I would happily use this lens even for architectural photography!

Mahesh Reddy



Aperture: f/5.6
Shutter Speed: 0.3sec
ISO: 640;

At f/1.4, darkening at the corners was evident. Corner darkening reduced appreciably by f/4. Flare could be seen in shots that included the sun. Chromatic aberration was very well controlled – only a trace could be seen when we tried hard to look for it.

Overall, a very good performer!

Value for Money

The Sigma 20mm f/1.4 DG HSM Art is available at an MRP of Rs.73,000/-. This may sound expensive but don't forget that it is a f/1.4 lens. In our opinion, the price is justified. **|SP**

KEY SPECIFICATIONS

Lens Construction:	15 elements in 11 groups
Aperture range:	F/1.4 – 16
Min. focussing distance:	27.6cm/10.9"
Diaphragm blades:	9, rounded
Max. magnification:	1:7.1
Dimensions:	90.7 (Dia) x 129.8mm
Weight:	950g

FINAL SCORE



83%

PLUS

- Very sharp
- Almost imperceptible distortion
- Very good build quality

MINUS

- Filters cannot be used
- Quite heavy
- No IS (but would you need it for a super wide-angle lens?)

VERDICT

The Sigma 20mm f/1.4 DG HSM is a very sharp lens – ideal for landscapes, environmental portraits, architectural photography, shooting in any cramped spaces and for use in low light conditions, including astral-photography. It is on the heavier side but its ability to shoot in low light should make up for the weight. Best Buy!

Design and Build Quality 17/20

Key Features 16/20

Ergonomics 18/20

Performance

Autofocus	4/5
Sharpness	4/5
Distortion control	5/5
Aberrations	4.5/5
Darkening of corners	4/5
Extra features	3.5/5

Sub-Total 24.5/30

Value for Money 7.5/10

Inside the Box

✓ Lens
✓ Lens front and back caps
✓ Flower-shaped lens hood
✓ Warranty and lens literature



Tamron SP45mm f/1.8 Di VC USD **₹47,500**

Sujith Gopinath

All-weather Prime

Third party lens manufacturers have been traditionally considered budget options for major camera brands. However, of late, these manufacturers have started bringing out premium lenses with superior optics, sturdy construction, and fast apertures, competing directly with the camera manufacturers. The new Tamron SP series prime lenses are manufactured with the same principles in mind.

Design and Build Quality

The Tamron SP45mm f/1.8 is a premium lens and it surely reflects in the look and feel. The outer body is made of metal and composites. It has a metal mount and a matte-finished metal ring that provides a classy look. The lens is weather-sealed with a rubber ring that keeps dust and water from reaching the lens flange or sensor. The distance scale is legibly marked with white lettering. The design of this lens and the build quality are significantly better than most other Tamron lenses. The lens has two buttons, one for Vibration Compensation (VC) and the second for Focus mode. VC provides only On/Off options and Focus modes are Autofocus (AF) and Manual Focus (MF). The lens has a filter size of 67mm and a maximum diameter of 80.4mm. It has a length of 91.7mm for the Canon and 89.2mm for the Nikon model. The lens weighs 540g and 520g for Canon and Nikon respectively.

Key Features

The Tamron 45mm f/1.8 lens is primarily designed for 35mm Full-Frame cameras, but can also be used with APS-C sensor cameras. The lens is constructed with 10 elements in 8 groups including two molded glass aspherical elements which help in achieving uniform sharpness and illumination throughout the field. This also compensates for spherical and chromatic aberrations. In addition to this, the lens uses an LD (Low Dispersion) element. This element helps deliver crisp and clear images and eliminate colour fringing. The lens employs optical Vibration Compensation (VC) to deliver blur-free images even in low light.

The Tamron 45mm lens uses a 9-bladed diaphragm providing a circular aperture to reproduce a nice bokeh. The lens provides a minimum aperture of f/16. It is available in Canon, Nikon, and Sony mounts. The lens uses an Ultrasonic Silent Drive (USD) focus motor, which is believed to provide faster, more accurate, and silent autofocus. This provides full time manual override even in autofocus mode.

The 45mm lens is coated with eBAND (Extended Bandwidth and Angular-Dependency) and BBAR (Broad-Band Anti-Reflection) anti-reflection coatings that eliminate flare and ghosting. eBAND is a nano-structured coating that offers higher transmissivity and improves anti-reflection characteristics against angular incident rays. The lens has a minimum focussing distance of 0.29m, which is stated to be the best in this category of lenses. The 45mm lens provides a maximum magnification ratio of 1:3.4.

The lens also has a Fluorine coating that provides long-lasting oil and water resistance. This makes it easier to wipe moisture and smudges away. The lens is constructed with weather sealing that prevents moisture from entering the internal mechanisms of the lens, allowing you to shoot outdoors in adverse conditions.

Ergonomics

We used a Canon EOS 600D to test the lens, and the Tamron 35mm f/1.8 balanced well with the Full-Frame body. With the straight barrel construction, the lens offers excellent grip. The textured rubber finish on the zoom ring makes it comfortable to operate. Though the Focus mode on the lens has only AF and MF options, the lens features full-time manual focus. The lack of any protective coating on the outer lens barrel makes it too cold and uncomfortable to hold, especially if you use the lens in cold climates.



Mahesh Reddy

Aperture: f/8
Shutter Speed: 1sec
ISO: 1000;

Performance

The Tamron 45mm f/1.8 lens was reasonably fast in autofocus in good light, but struggled to focus in low light. The AF operation was nearly quiet, but not as smooth as some of the professional models we have come across. We also felt that the AF was slightly off the mark in some cases. It could also be a problem with this particular piece that we tested.

The 45mm lens did not exhibit any trace of distortion. It produced good overall sharpness throughout the aperture range, and from edge to edge. The lens was sharpest from f/2 to f/8 and the sweet spot was found to be f/4.

We observed strong darkening of corners from f/1.8 to f/2.8, in spite of Tamron's claim that the lens produces uniform illumination. The lens also exhibited heavy flare along with strong purple fringing at f/1.8 in strong against-the-light shots. Vibration Correction did not provide much advantage in the shutter speed.

Value for Money

The Tamron 45mm f/1.8 lens retails at an MRP of Rs.47,500. Lenses from the camera manufacturers with similar specifications cost significantly less if you exclude the Vibration Correction feature, which did not really provide any advantage in our test. So this price is certainly on the higher side. |SP

KEY SPECIFICATIONS

Focal length: 45mm
Maximum Aperture: f/1.8
Angle of View (diagonal): 51°21' for full-frame format; 34°28' for APS-C format
Optical Construction: 10 elements in 8 groups
Min. focussing distance: 0.29m
Max. Magnification Ratio: 1:3.4
Filter Size: 67mm (dia)
Maximum Diameter: 80.4mm (dia)
Length: 91.7mm for Canon; 89.2mm for Nikon
Weight: 540g for Canon; 520g for Nikon
Aperture blades: 9 (circular aperture)
Minimum aperture: f/16
Compatible mounts: Canon, Nikon, Sony

FINAL SCORE



77%

Design and Build Quality	**18/20**
Key Features	**17/20**
Ergonomics	**17/20**
Performance	
Autofocus	3/5
Sharpness	4/5
Distortion control	4/5
Aberrations	3/5
Darkening of corners	3/5
Extra features	3/5
Sub-Total	**20/30**
Value for Money	**5/10**

PLUS

- Sturdy construction
- Weather sealing
- Uniform sharpness

MINUS

- Below par performance
- Over-priced

VERDICT

The Tamron SP45mm f/1.8 Di VC USD lens is weather-sealed and comes with Vibration Correction, which are both absent in most competitors. However, the VC system does not seem to provide much advantage in shutter speed, probably because of the focal length and stability of the lens when hand-held. Even the performance leaves much to be desired.



Inside the Box

✓ Lens
✓ 95mm snap-on front lens cap,
✓ Rear lens cap
✓ Metal lens hood
✓ User manual
✓ Warranty card
✓ Inspection card
✓ Box with custom cut foam insert.

Zeiss 28mm f/1.4 Otus APO Distagon T* Lens **₹3,29,950** Ashok Kandimalla

A superlative manual focus wide-angle lens!

This new offering from Zeiss is the first wide-angle and the third overall in the Otus series of premium grade lenses. As with all Zeiss D-SLR lenses, this is a manual focus only lens but with electronic contacts. This particular model is available in Canon and Nikon mounts. Zeiss is one of the few manufacturers who deliver their lenses with a signed inspection card indicating that lenses have been inspected individually.

Design and Build Quality

The Zeiss 28mm f/1.4 Otus APO Distagon lens is built like a battleship. It has all metal construction (except for the rubber covered aperture and focussing rings) and is finished beautifully in satin black. The lens widens considerably in the front. The supplied metal lens hood is petal shaped and is very well built – strong, with good flocking. The shape of the hood has been designed to blend nicely with the lens body contours. While it is a MF lens, the electronic contacts make it behave in all other respects like an AF lens with focus confirmation. It retains full compatibility with all exposure modes and meter patterns.

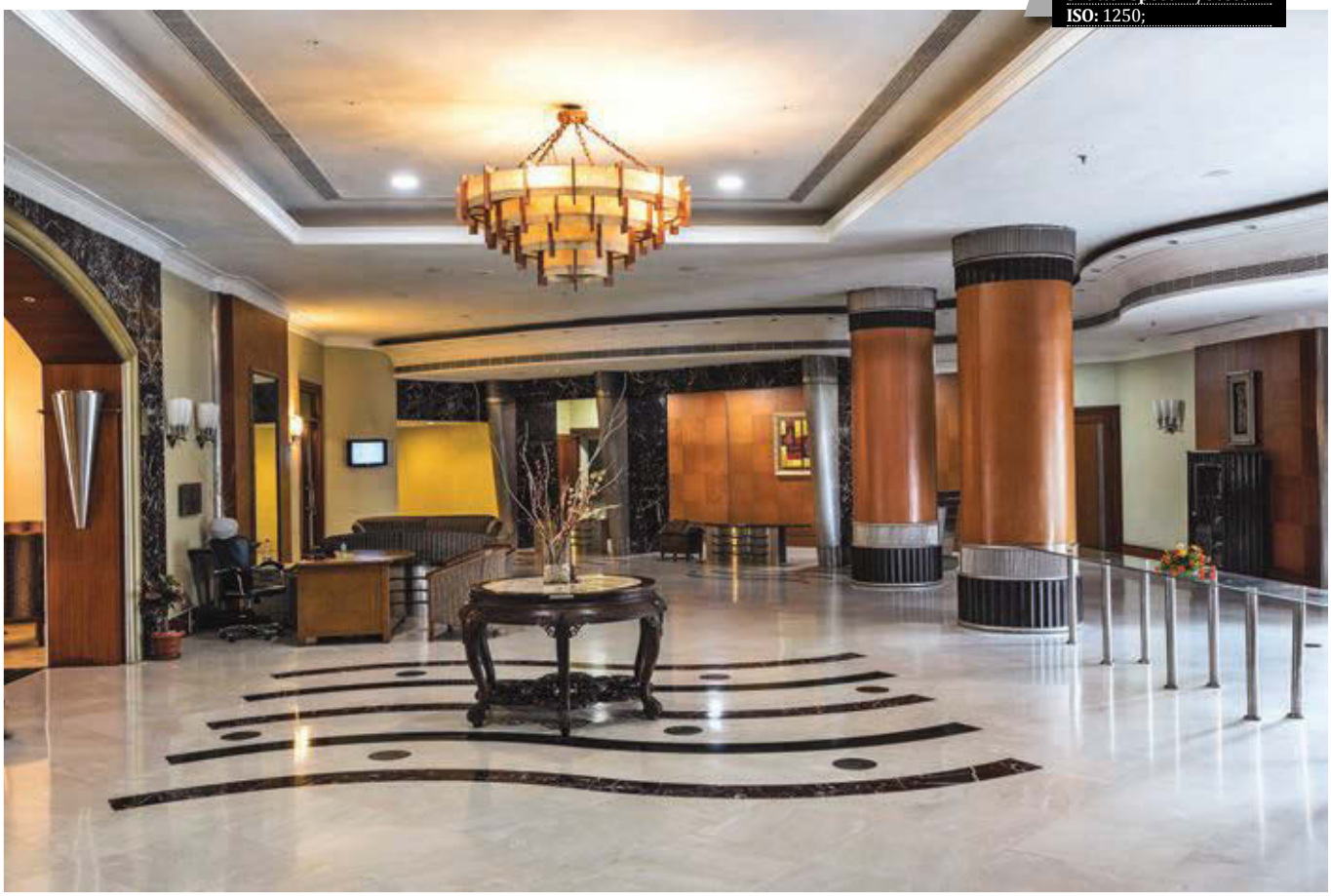
The Otus is extraordinarily large and heavy for a wide-angle lens. It is monster-sized with a gigantic filter diameter of 95mm!

On the plus side, it is packaged in a beautiful white coloured box with a custom cut foam insert to hold the lens snugly and safely.

Key Features

The Zeiss 28mm f/1.4 Otus is based on an extremely complex design (with no less than 16 elements in 13 groups). It also uses Zeiss' famed T* multi-coating to reduce reflections. This lens design is apochromatic, meaning that chromatic aberrations are virtually eliminated. This is achieved by using no less than eight Anomalous Partial Dispersion elements. Likewise the Distagon design (used on most Zeiss retro-focus wide-angle lenses) eliminates distortion for all practical purposes. All numbers and markings are engraved (not screen printed) in very legible bright yellow colour. However, both meters and feet on the distance scale are marked in the same yellow colour and this may lead to confusion.

Ashok Kandimalla



Camera: Nikon D750
Aperture: f/5.6
Shutter Speed: 1/30sec
ISO: 1250;

Ergonomics

The lens supplied to us came with a Nikon mount and we tested it on the Nikon D750 and D3s bodies. The lens/body combination in the former case was a bit front heavy. It balanced much better on the heavier Nikon D3s. Due to its internal focussing system the length of the lens does not change when you focus and so the balance does not shift either. The front element does not rotate thus making it easy to use graduated and polarizing filters, both of which are used often by landscape photographers. Both the focussing and aperture rings are covered by very grippy softish rubber. Manual focussing was a delight. The damping was just right and movement of the focussing ring was silky smooth. There is a certain amount of tautness in the movement which is a bit difficult to describe but can be felt. You need to turn the focussing ring as much as 120º to focus from the closest focussing point to infinity.

The aperture ring (only present for Nikon mount) engages at half stop intervals with very positive clicks (in both the directions) and is marked from f/1.4 to f/16. The most serious complaint we have is the weight. At nearly 1.4Kgs it is extraordinarily heavy for this sort of a lens. To put this in proper perspective it weighs almost as much as a typical 70-200 f/2.8 lens! Also, being very large (filter diameter is 95mm), people with small hands may have problem in gripping it firmly. Simply put, this is not exactly a "walk in the park" lens.

Performance

As you would expect, the performance is beyond reproach. There was no chromatic aberration visible. There was a very slight trace of barrel distortion which was easily corrected automatically in Lightroom once the lens profile was activated. This and the fast aperture make the lens the ideal choice for critical architectural and interior work. The contrast was excellent across the frame and the colours were punchy straight out of the camera. The most important aspect was that the lens was absolutely amazing when used fully open. It was sharp even at f/1.4 with only very slight degradation in the corners. Corner sharpness improves from one stop down and overall sharpness is maintained till about f/5.6. Vignetting was minimal and was gone by closing aperture just one stop.

As with its siblings, the lens can be used fully open with absolutely top grade results. Remember that using focus confirmation is just not accurate enough! Live view with magnification must be used when focussing. A solid tripod is a must to get the best of this lens. The bokeh was buttery smooth, guaranteed to smother even the most cluttered background to cream.



Ashok Kandimalla

Camera: Nikon D750
Aperture: f/5.6
Shutter Speed: 1/30sec
ISO: 1400;

Value for Money

This lens is priced at a whopping Rs. 329,950/- (MRP). Yes, you have read the number right! That is an astonishingly high figure for any 28mm D-SLR lens. But Otus lenses are not simply 'any' D-SLR lenses! If it is any consolation, the other two Otus lenses are roughly in the same ballpark.

So, is it worth it? If you are planning to use it casually as an ordinary wide-angle lens then this is just not worth the money (plus of course the weight and size). However, if you are a very contemplative photographer or a critical architectural / landscape artist (or someone else who just wants the highest quality money can buy) then, along with a high pixel count D-SLR like the Nikon D810 or Canon 5Ds, this may even be considered as an 'economical' alternative to a medium format system. In any case, remember that a lot of care (especially in focussing) is needed to extract the best out of the Otus. Plus you need to put up with the size and weight. |SP

KEY SPECIFICATIONS

Focal length & coverage: 28mm, full frame
Aperture range: f/1.4 to f/16 (with ½ stop intervals)
Lens construction: 16 elements in 13 groups
Picture angle: 75° with full frame format
Highest magnification: 1:6.25
Focussing Range: 30cm – ∞
Filter/attachment size: 95mm
Lens Hood: Supplied, all metal construction
Diameter x length Approximately: diameter 109 mm, length 135mm (without lens caps)
Weight: Approximately 1400gms (~ 3lbs)

Design and Build Quality	**20/20**
Key Features	**16/20**
Ergonomics	**16/20**
Performance	
Autofocus	0/5
Sharpness	5/5
Distortion control	5/5
Aberrations	5/5
Darkening of corners	5/5
Extra features	3/5
Sub-Total	**23/30**
Value for Money	**6/10**

FINAL SCORE



81%

PLUS

- The best wide-angle lens for D-SLRs
- Finest optical quality you can get
- Minimal (almost negligible) aberrations or distortions.
- Super sharp even wide open
- Outstanding build quality
- Just the right damping when focussing
- Aperture ring click stops very positive

MINUS

- Extremely large and heavy
- No AF or image stabilization
- Hyper expensive

VERDICT

This is a not a humble run of the mill wide-angle lens. It will not appeal to the techies who want the latest technologies like AF and image stabilization. Also, it is perhaps simply beyond many due to its price. However, this is the best lens of its class. No questions. The super-high price is reflected in its exemplary performance. For those who want the "best in the world" wide-angle lens, look no further.



WD My Passport Wireless

Sujith Gopinath

Stream on-the-go!

With mobile devices creeping into every part of our lives, on-board storage becomes a limitation, especially if you have one of those high-megapixel and 4K capable smartphones or tablets. The Western Digital (WD) My Passport Wireless lets you share and backup data wirelessly from your smart gadgets and computers. The drive is portable and has an SD card slot in case you want to take a backup from the card directly on the field.

The My Passport Wireless can be connected with up to eight devices simultaneously. You can instantly share your data using any device connected to the drive.

The My Passport Wireless has a rechargeable battery, which frees you of the requirement of an external power source. WD claims that the battery can last for up to six hours of continuous video streaming or up to 20 hours of standby. You can connect with the Wireless and access your files using smartphone, tablet, connected TVs and other DLNA/UPnP devices with the WD My Cloud mobile app. The device can also function as a WiFi hub, allowing you to share an internet connection with multiple devices.

You can set up a Wi-Fi password for every photo, video, music and important file. You can also protect your drive from USB access using Drive Lock in the device dashboard.

Data can be transferred from a computer using the USB 3.0 interface. WD claims that the drive is durable, shock-tolerant and reliable. The My Passport Wireless carries a two-year limited warranty.

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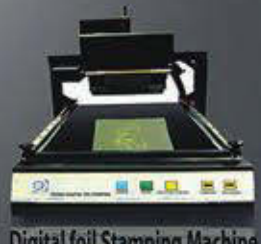
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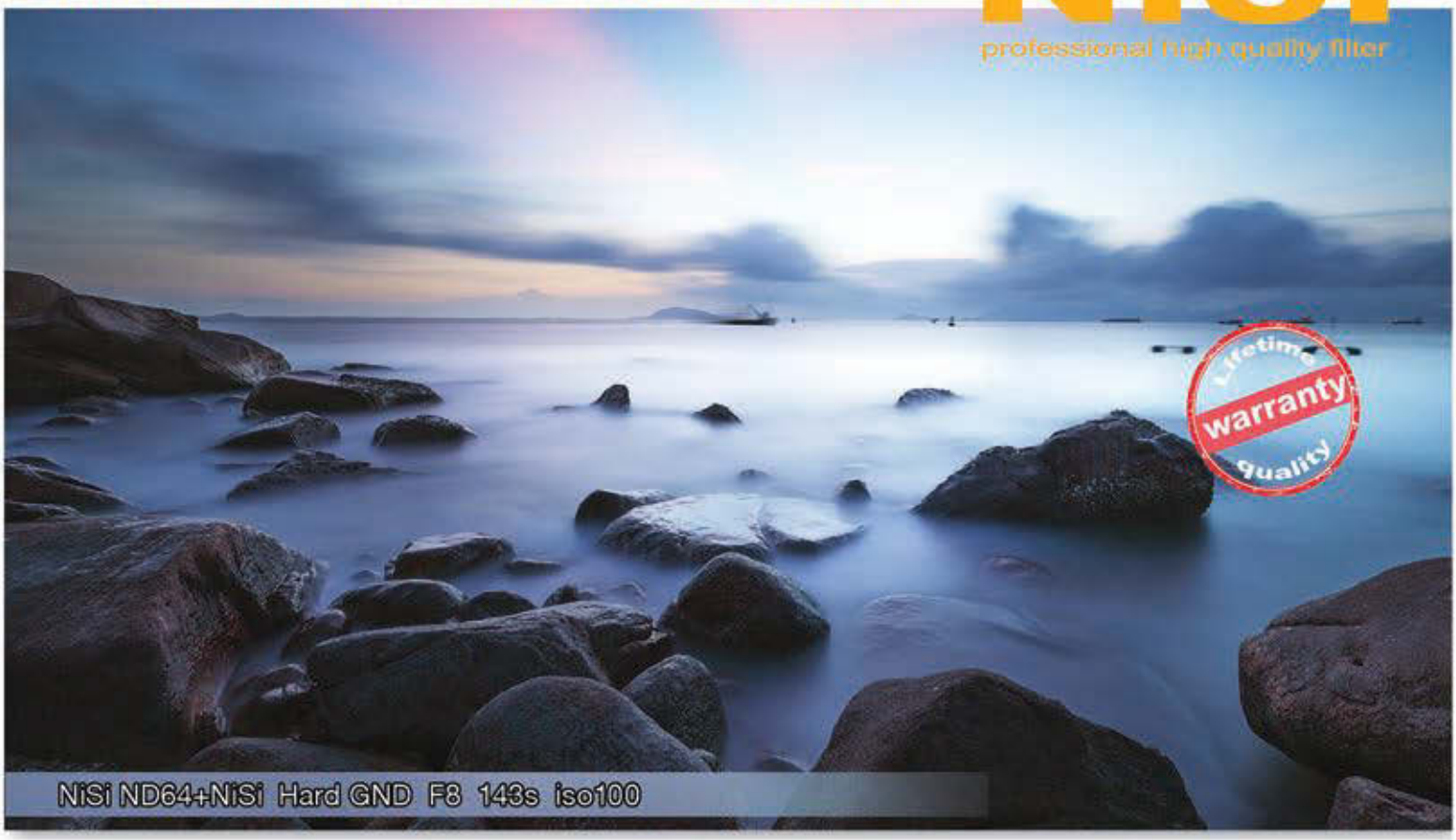
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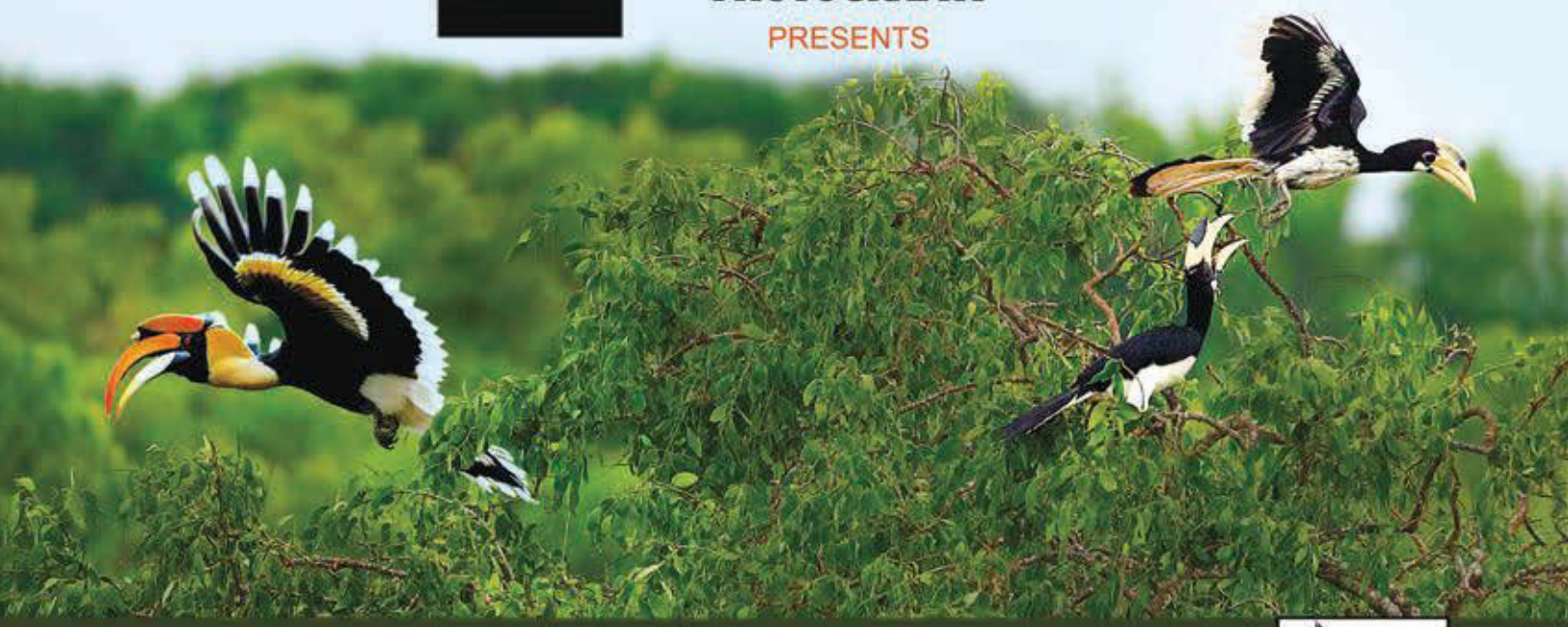
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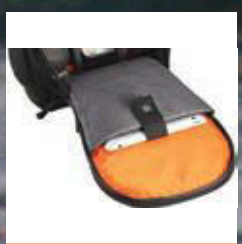
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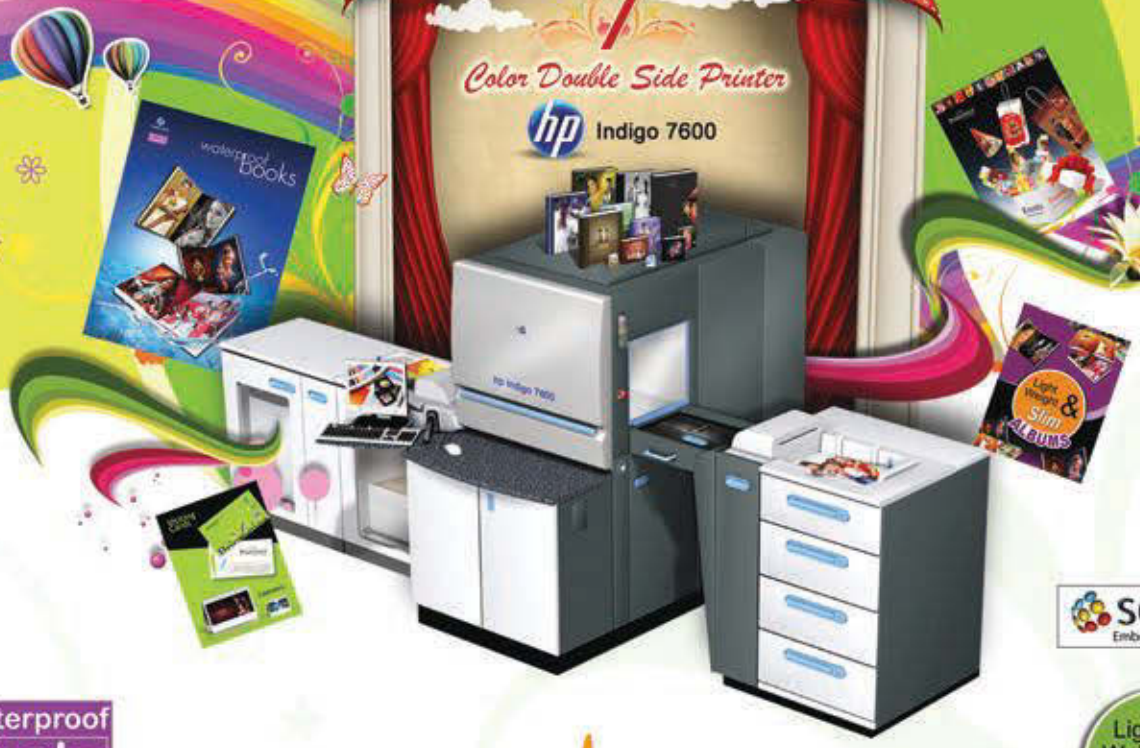
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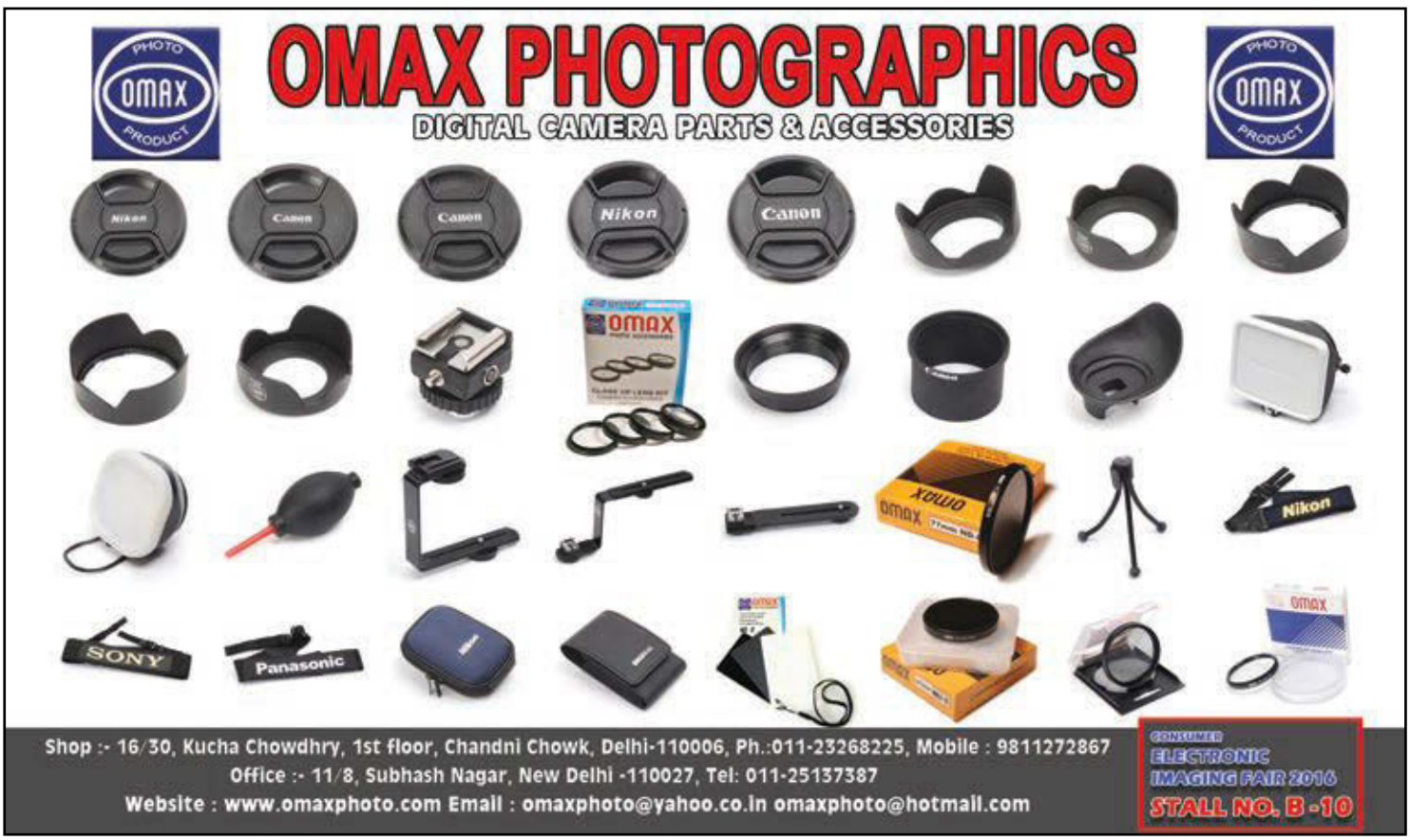
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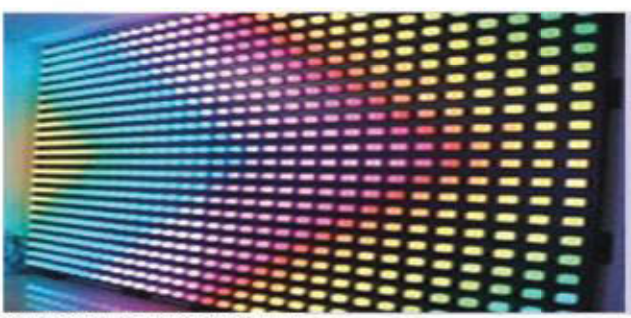
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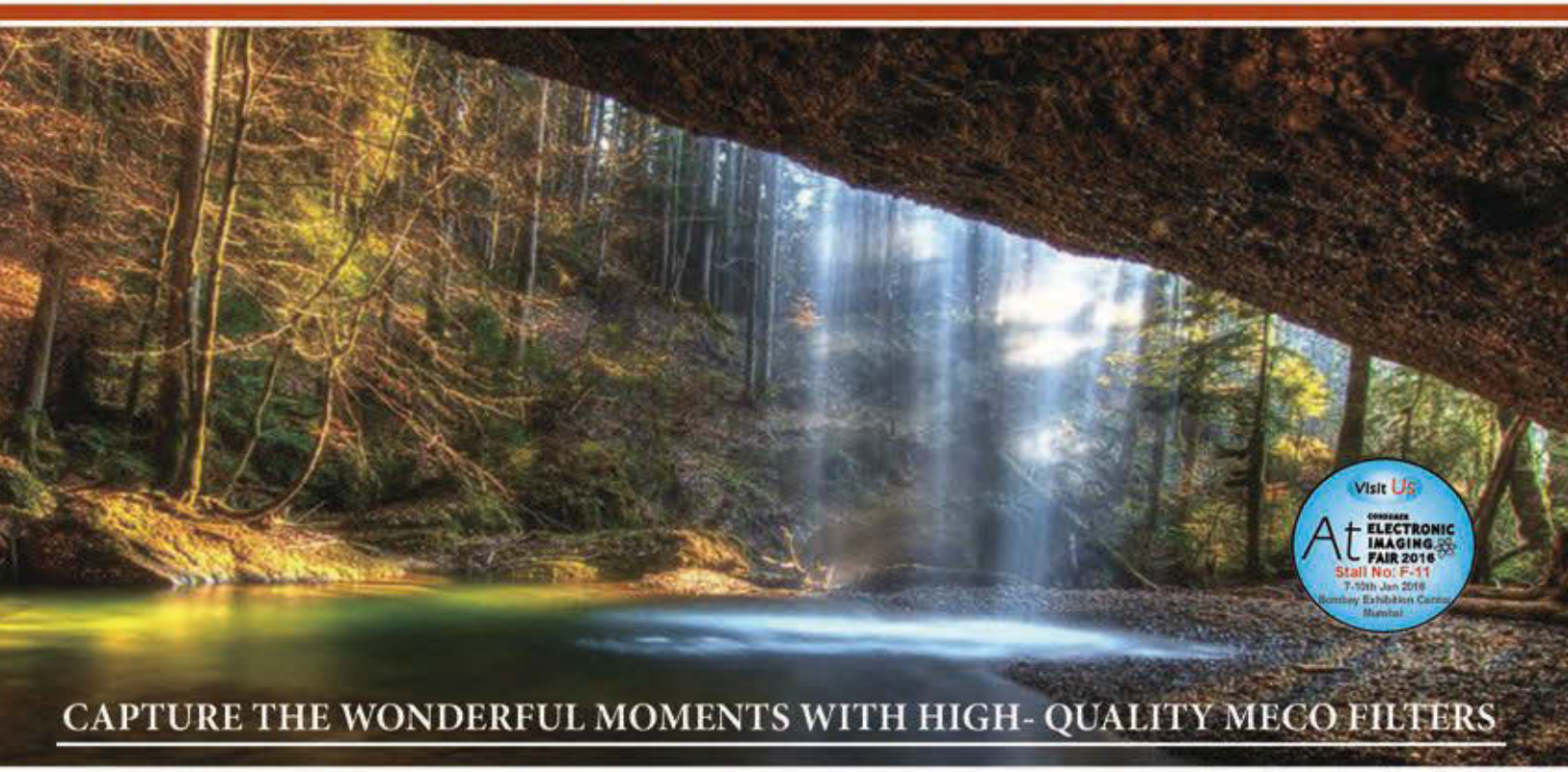
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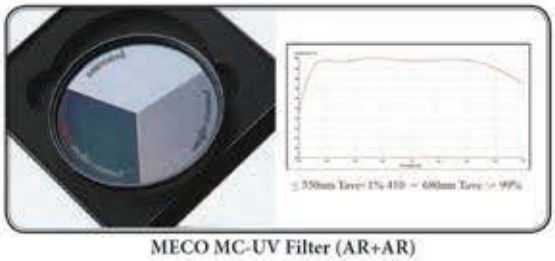
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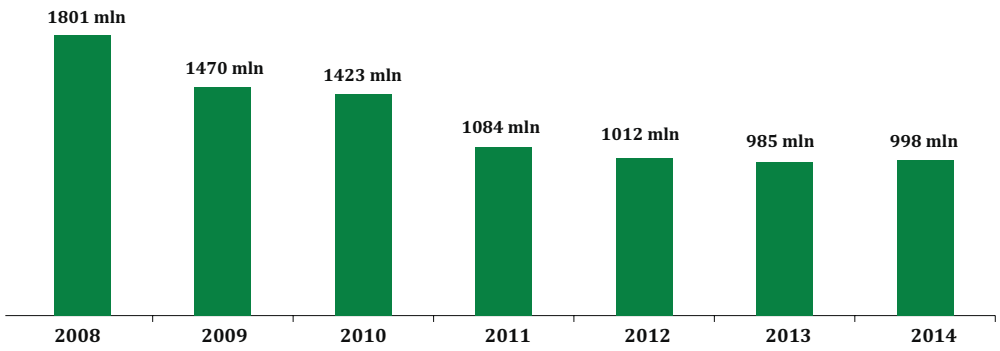
- 49.3 million digital cameras were sold in 2014.

- Global market share of digital cameras:

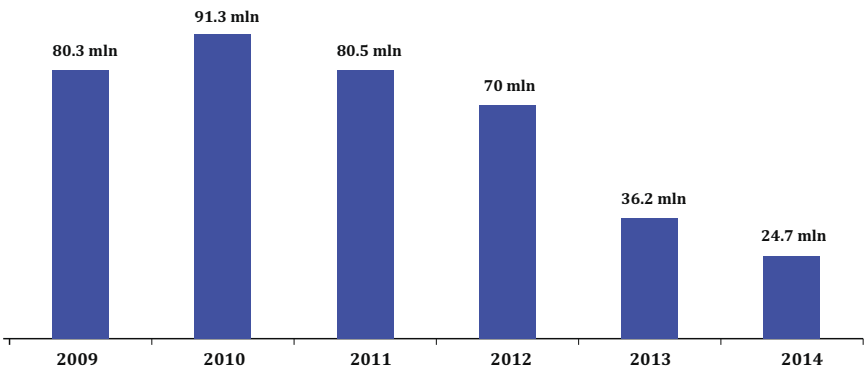
	2009	2010
Canon	19%	19%
Sony	16.9%	17.9%
Nikon	11.1%	12.6%
Samsung	10.9%	11.1%
Kodak	8.8%	7.4%
Panasonic	7.6%	7.6%
Olympus	6.2%	6.1%
Fuji	5.4%	4.9%
Casio	4.7%	4%

- Japanese companies produced more than 100 million digital cameras in 2012. In 2013, this number dropped to 60 million.

- Similarly, value of digital camera shipments from Japan kept on declining after reaching a peak of 1801 million dollars in 2008.



- China used to be a major manufacturer of digital cameras, particularly at the lower end. The collapse in the demand for compact cameras has taken a toll on Chinese manufactured cameras as shown below:



- It is estimated that nearly 1.8 billion photos are uploaded each day worldwide.

- Instagram has 400 million active users.

- Nikon has announced that a new D5 professional D-SLR is under development along with a new SP-5000 Speedlight.

- Canon has announced that on November 10,2015, it has produced its 80 millionth EOS camera. The 70 million mark had been reached only 21 months ago. Canon has already produced 110 million EF series lences.

- The popularity of the Apple iPhone has little to do with the proficiency of its camera. Top end models from the likes of Samsung,Sony and Motorola have left the iPhone 6s and 6s Plus with their 12MP sensor way behind in the imaging quality battle. |SP

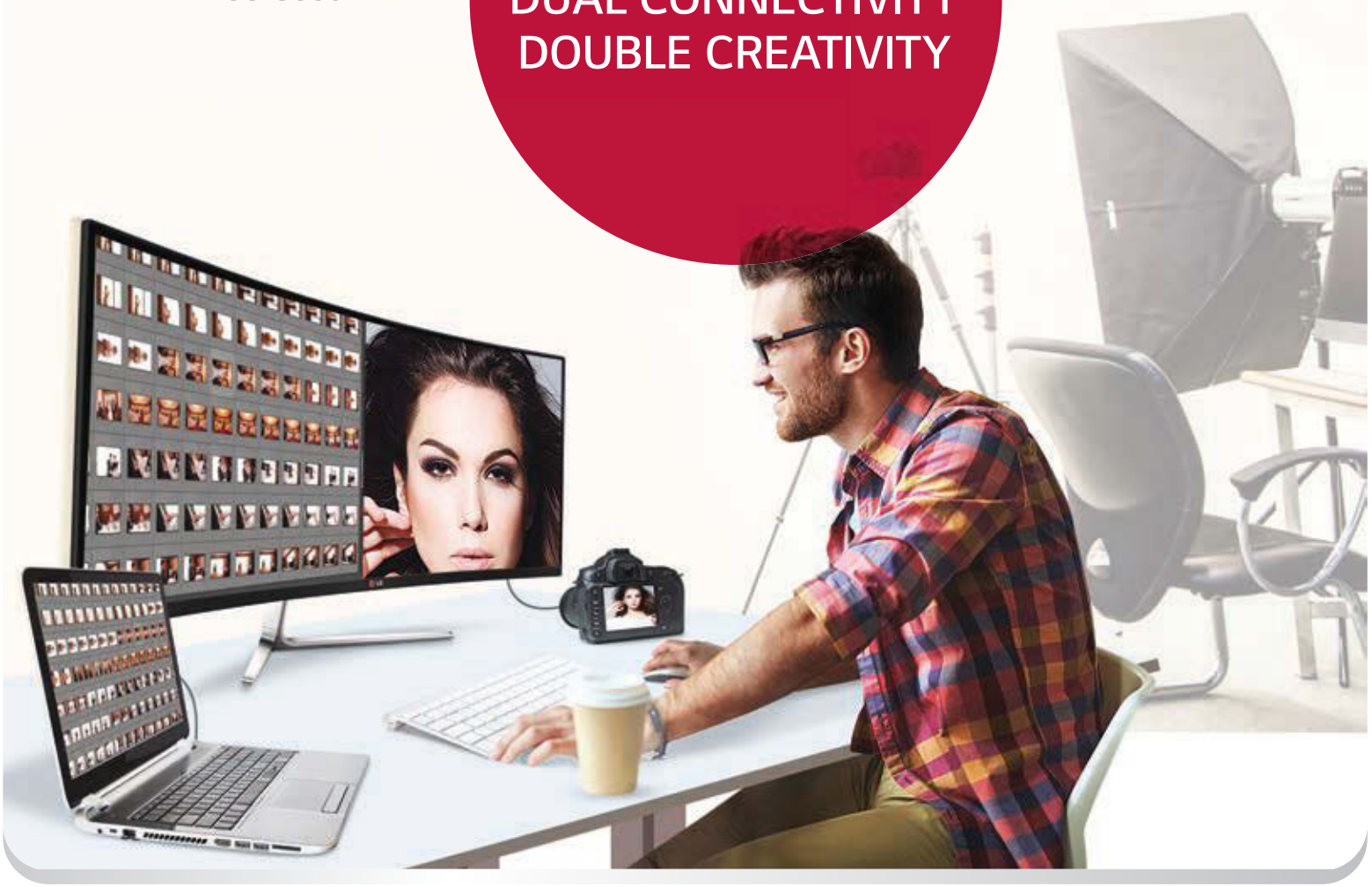
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